

From The Pages Of The BOYS™

Highland Laddie

DYNAMITE 4



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From The Pages Of **The BOYS™**

Highland Laddie™

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.



Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

Story by:
GARTH ENNIS

Letters by:
SIMON BOWLAND

Pencils by:
JOHN MCCREA with
KEITH BURNS

Colors by:
TONY AVIÑA

Inks by:
KEITH BURNS with
JOHN MCCREA

Cover by:
DARICK ROBERTSON

The Boys Created By:
ENNIS & ROBERTSON

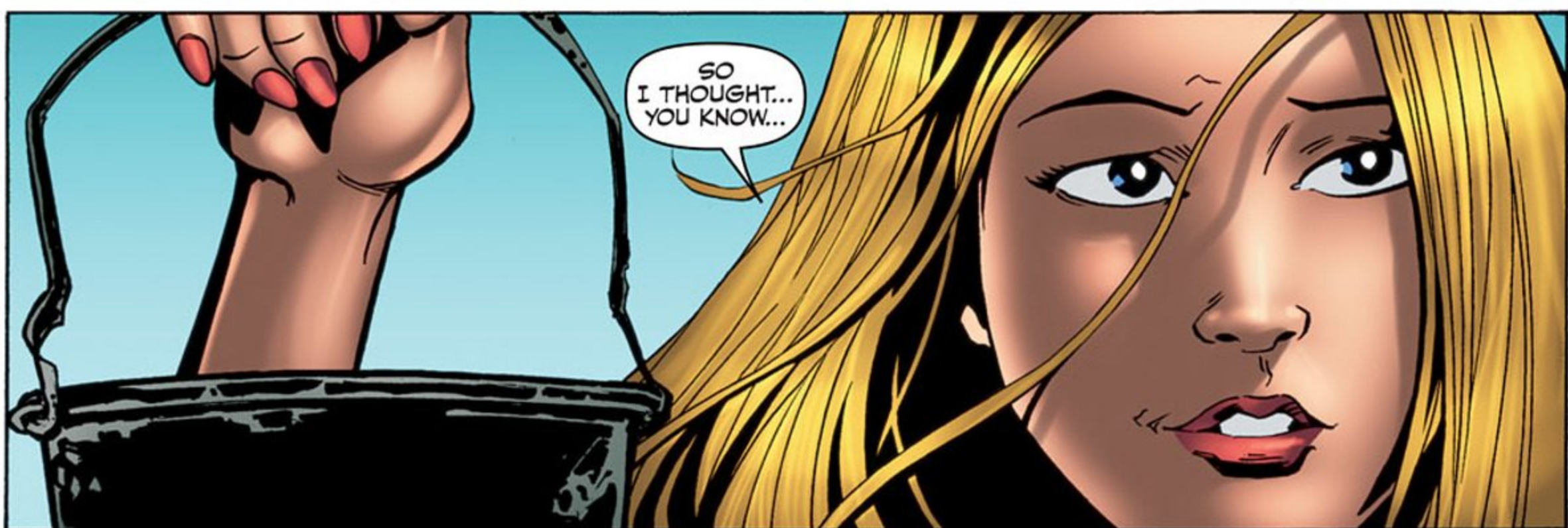


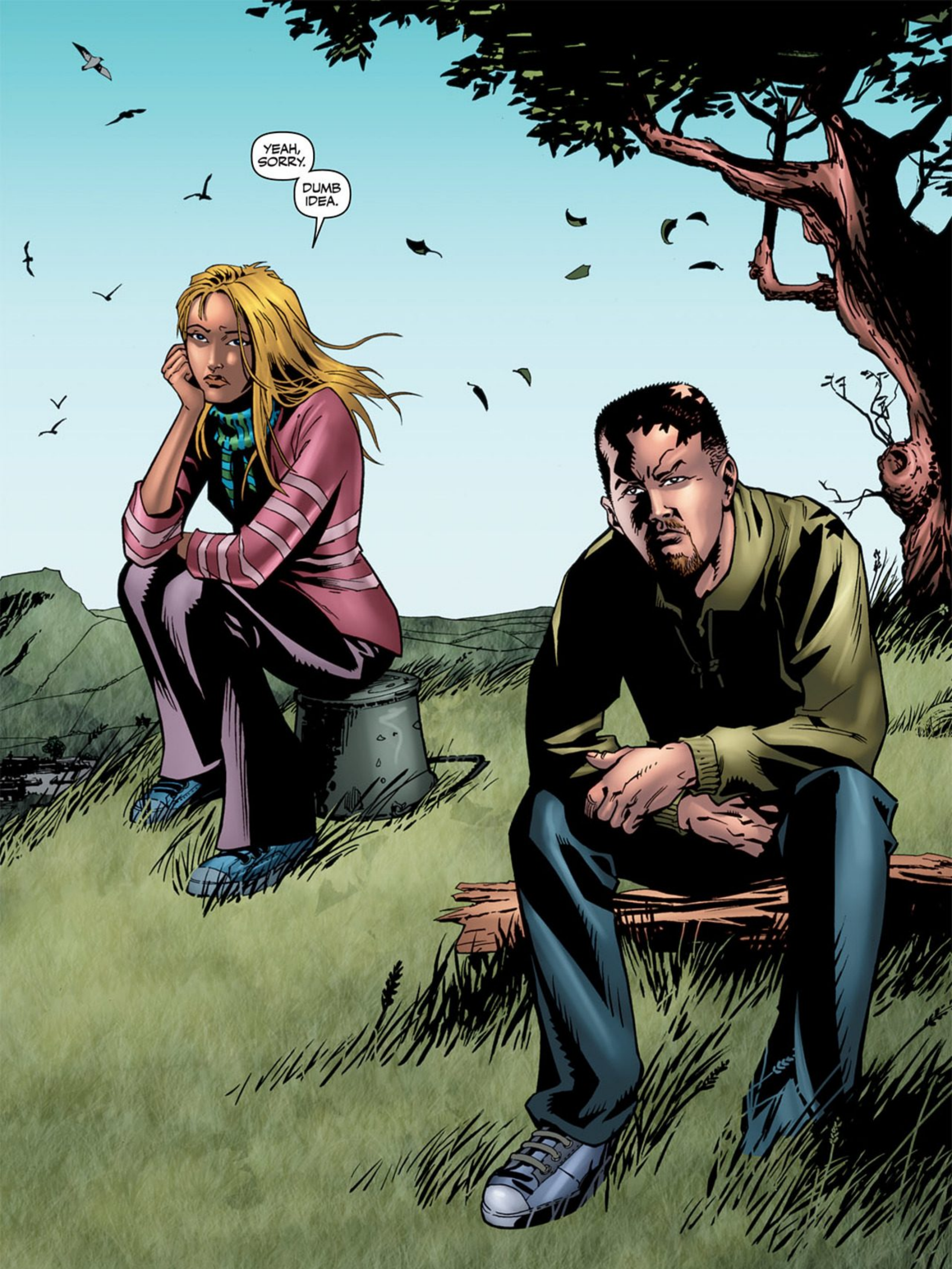
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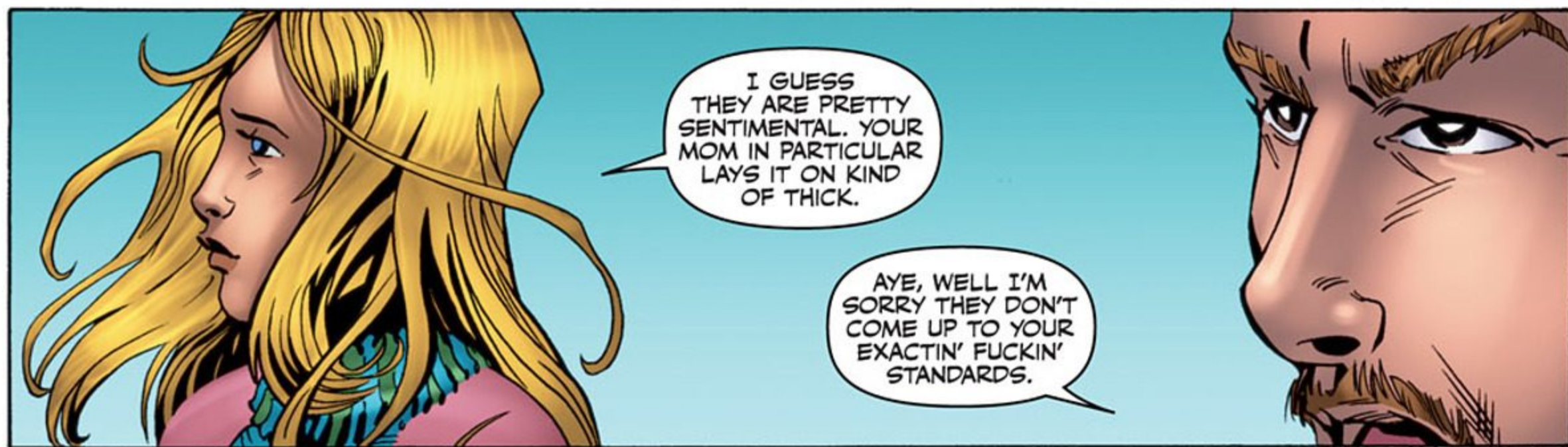
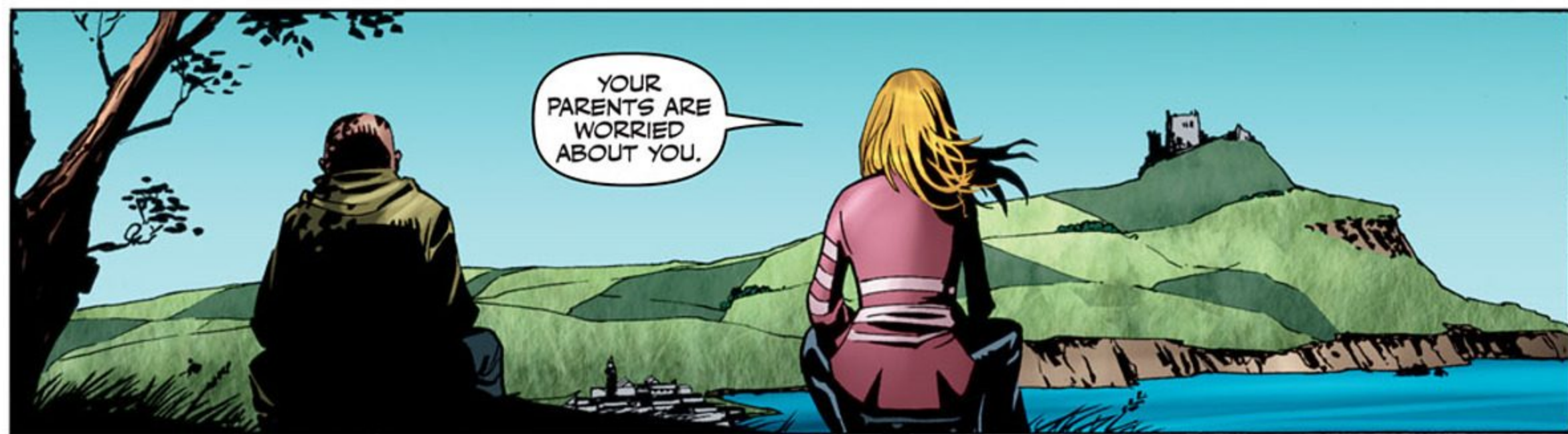


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4: A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY





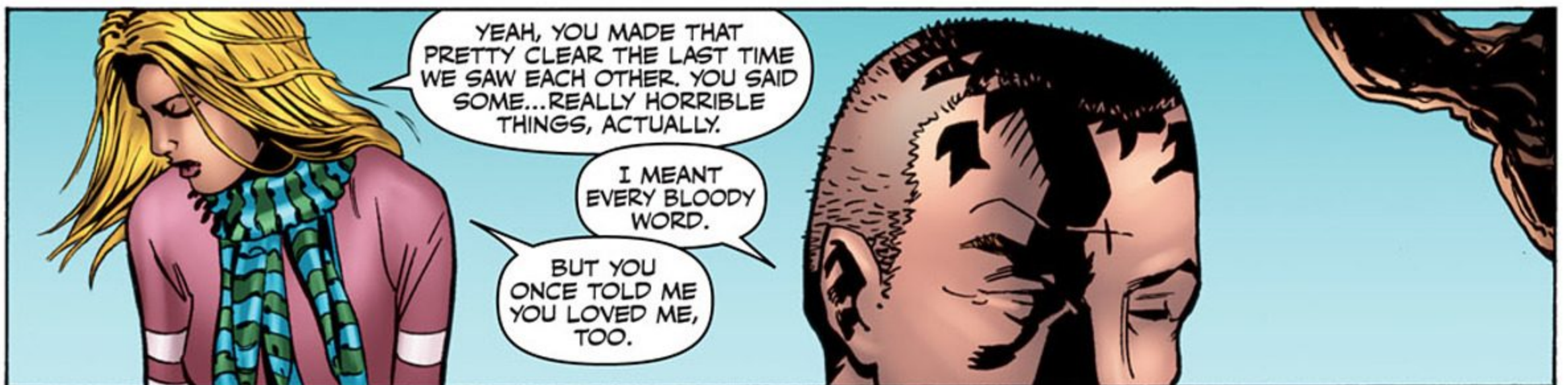
I JUST
HATE WHAT
HAPPENED.

I WANTED TO
COME AND...SEE
YOU...I WANTED
TO TRY TO...



IF YOU THINK
THERE'S ANY CHANCE
OF US GETTIN' BACK
TOGETHER, YOU'VE HAD
A WASTED TRIP.

WE'RE
OVER AN' DONE
WI'. WE'RE
DEAD.



YEAH, YOU MADE THAT
PRETTY CLEAR THE LAST TIME
WE SAW EACH OTHER. YOU SAID
SOME...REALLY HORRIBLE
THINGS, ACTUALLY.

I MEANT
EVERY BLOODY
WORD.

BUT YOU
ONCE TOLD ME
YOU LOVED ME,
TOO.



YOU SAID WE
FOUND EACH OTHER.
YOU SAID YOU WANTED
US TO BE ABOUT THAT,
NOT SILLY LITTLE
FEARS.

YOU MADE ME
FEEL LIKE YOU'D REACHED
THROUGH EVERYTHING
TERRIBLE AND SHITTY AND
MISERABLE IN THE WORLD,
AND TAKEN HOLD OF ME
AND ME ALONE.



AYE, BUT THE
SHITE STUFF WAS
WHAT WE TURNED OUT
TO BE ALL ABOUT,
WASN'T IT.

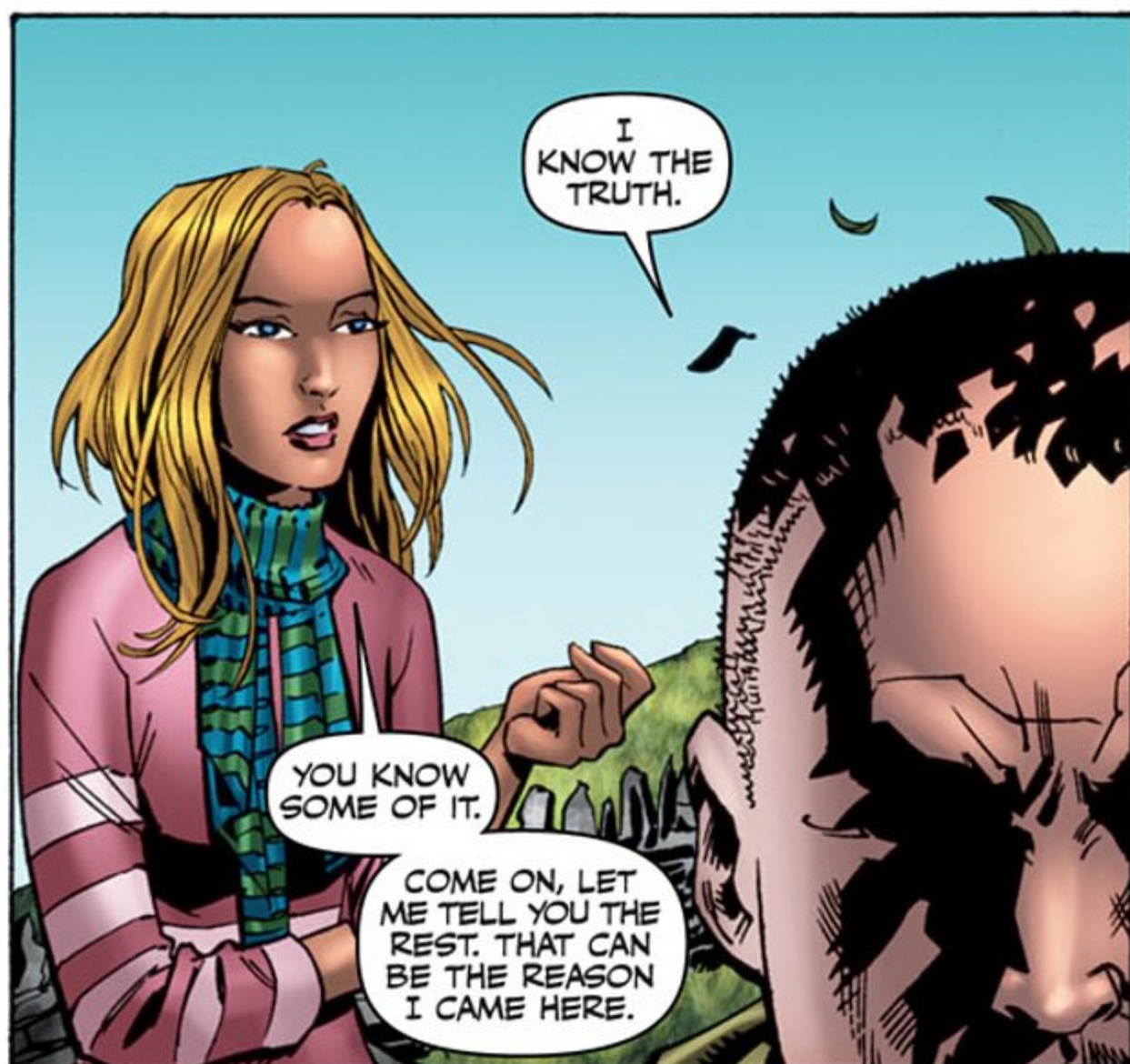
'CAUSE
YOU LIED TO
ME. YOU'RE A
FUCKIN' SUPE.
AN' YOU--

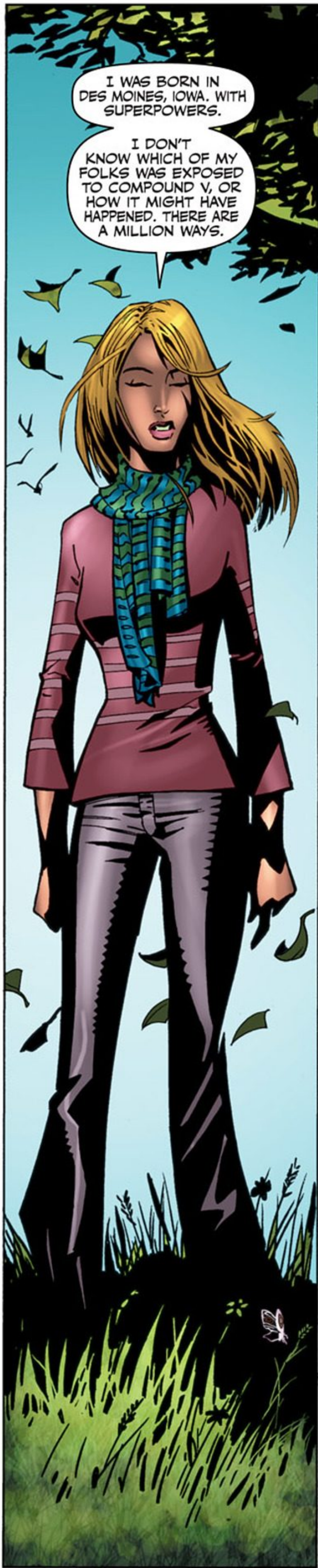
YEAH,
OKAY.



SO
WHAT ABOUT IF
I TOLD YOU THE
TRUTH?

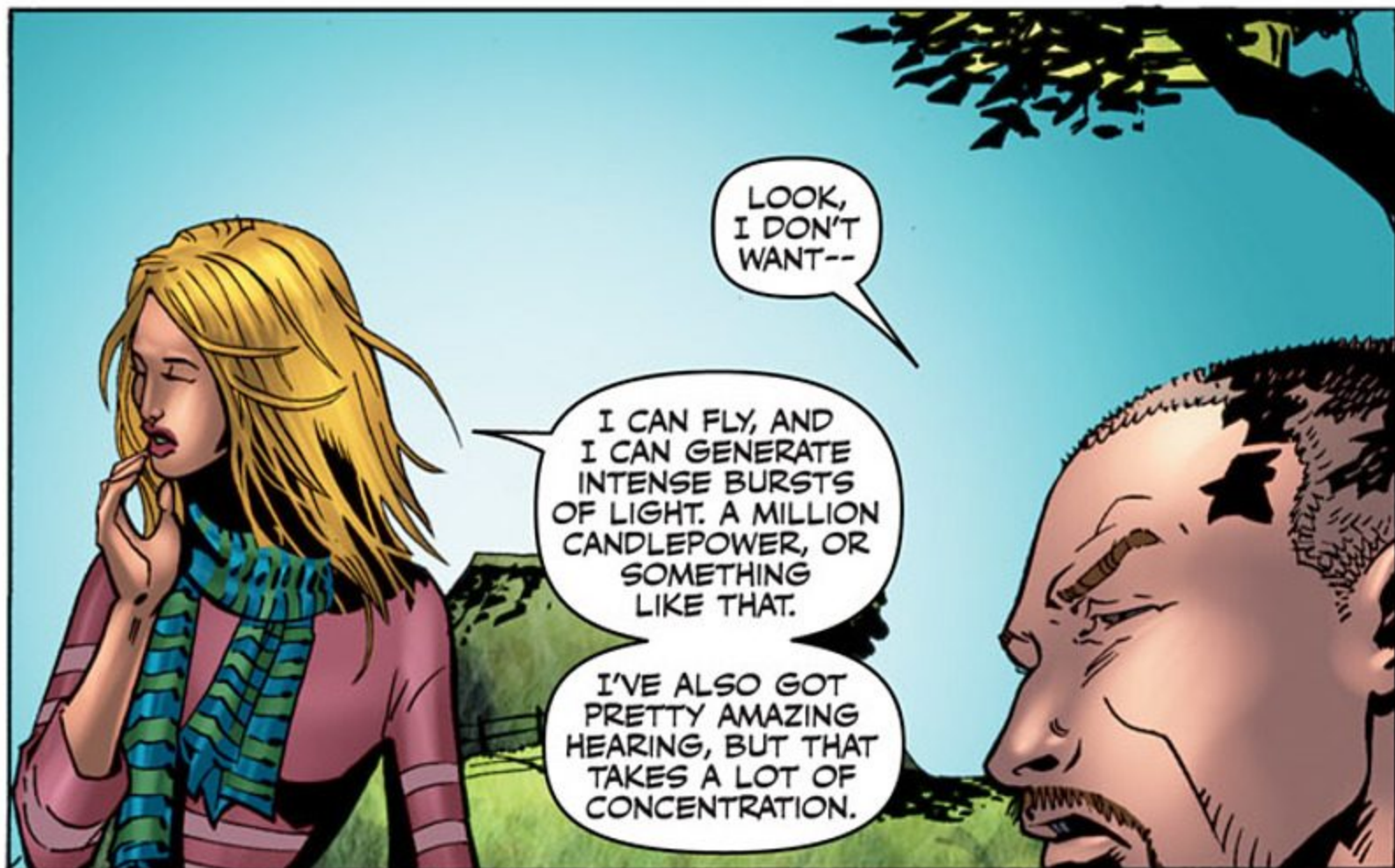
I THINK
I OWE YOU
THAT MUCH,
DON'T I?





I WAS BORN IN
DES MOINES, IOWA. WITH
SUPERPOWERS.

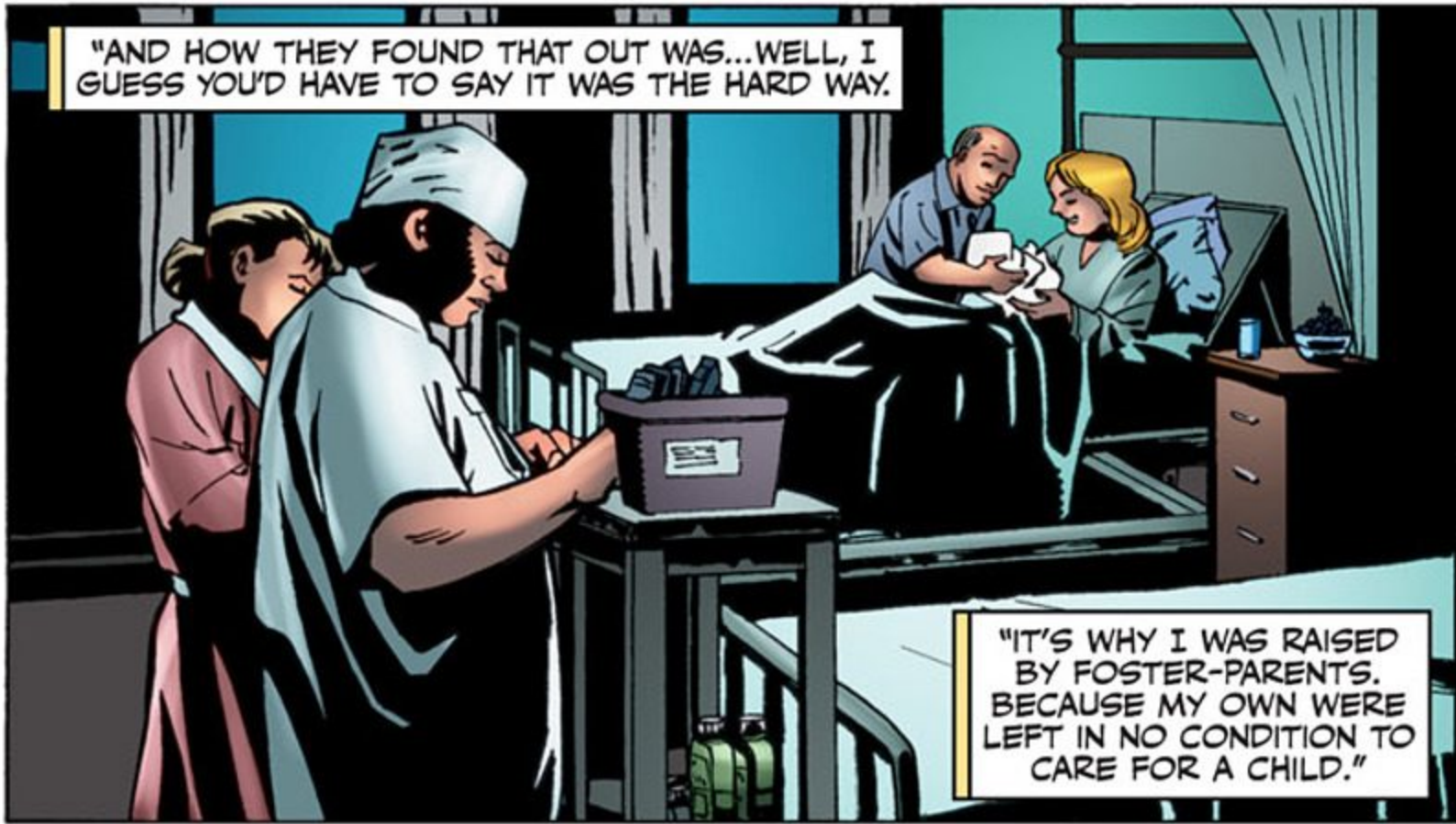
I DON'T
KNOW WHICH OF MY
FOLKS WAS EXPOSED
TO COMPOUND V, OR
HOW IT MIGHT HAVE
HAPPENED. THERE ARE
A MILLION WAYS.



LOOK,
I DON'T
WANT--

I CAN FLY, AND
I CAN GENERATE
INTENSE BURSTS
OF LIGHT. A MILLION
CANDLEPOWER, OR
SOMETHING
LIKE THAT.

I'VE ALSO GOT
PRETTY AMAZING
HEARING, BUT THAT
TAKES A LOT OF
CONCENTRATION.

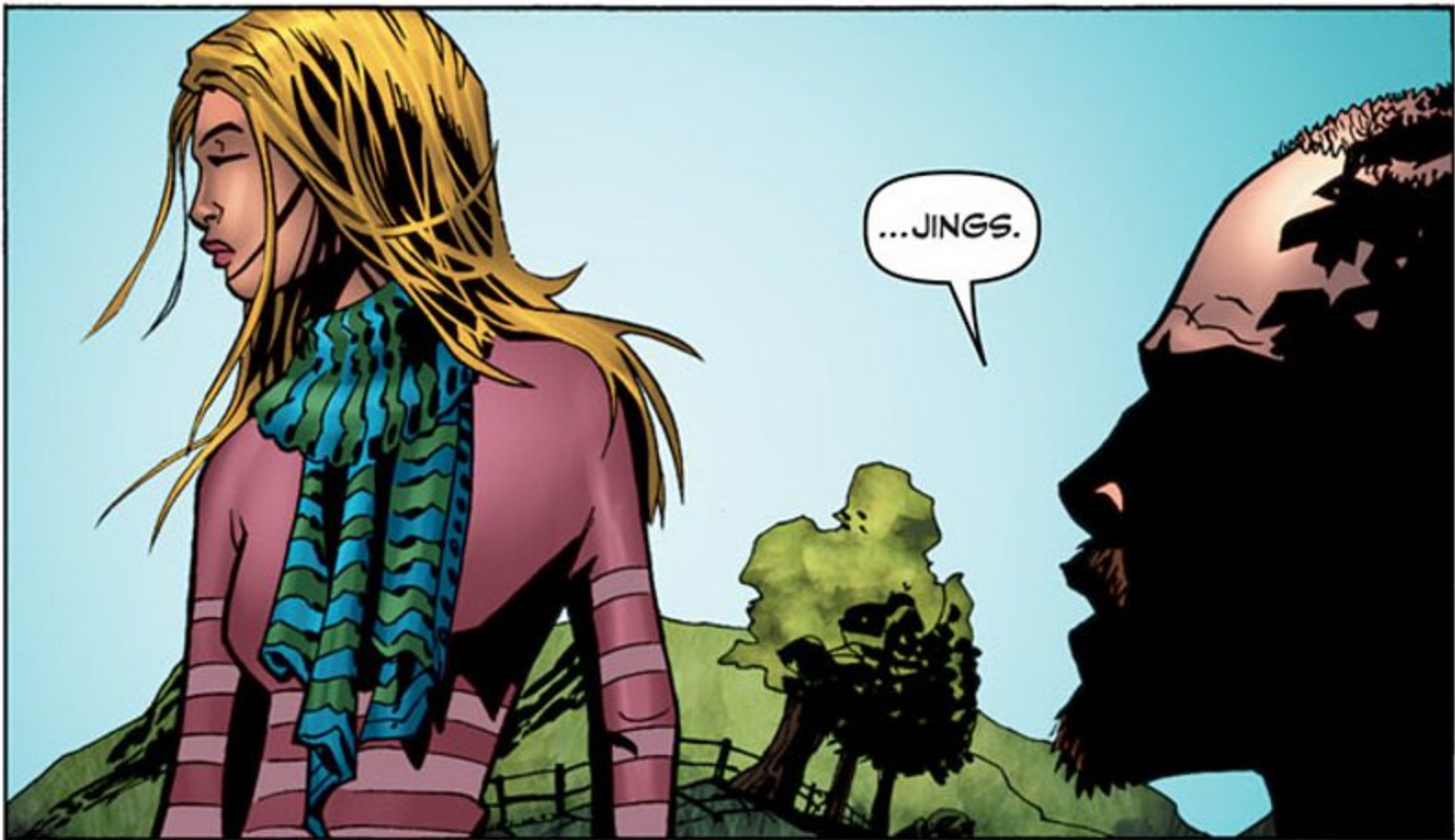


"AND HOW THEY FOUND THAT OUT WAS...WELL, I
GUESS YOU'D HAVE TO SAY IT WAS THE HARD WAY.

"IT'S WHY I WAS RAISED
BY FOSTER-PARENTS.
BECAUSE MY OWN WERE
LEFT IN NO CONDITION TO
CARE FOR A CHILD."



AAAAAAAAAAHH

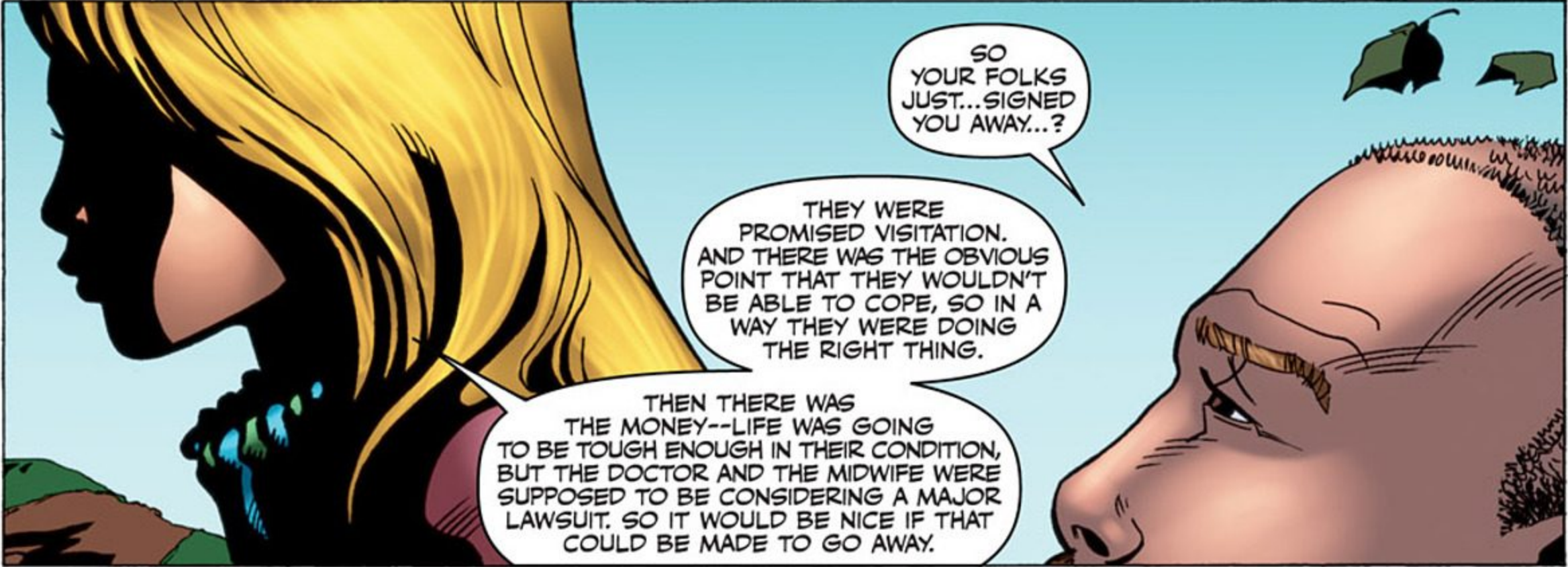


...JINGS.



"VOUGHT-AMERICAN WERE ON THE CASE RIGHT AWAY. THEY HAVE PEOPLE READY--SOMETIMES HUNTERS, SOMETIMES JUST LAWYERS. BUT THEY GET WORD FROM A HOSPITAL, OR LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT, OR WHOEVER IT IS CALLS THE ONE-EIGHT-HUNDRED NUMBER...

"AND THEY OPEN A FILE."



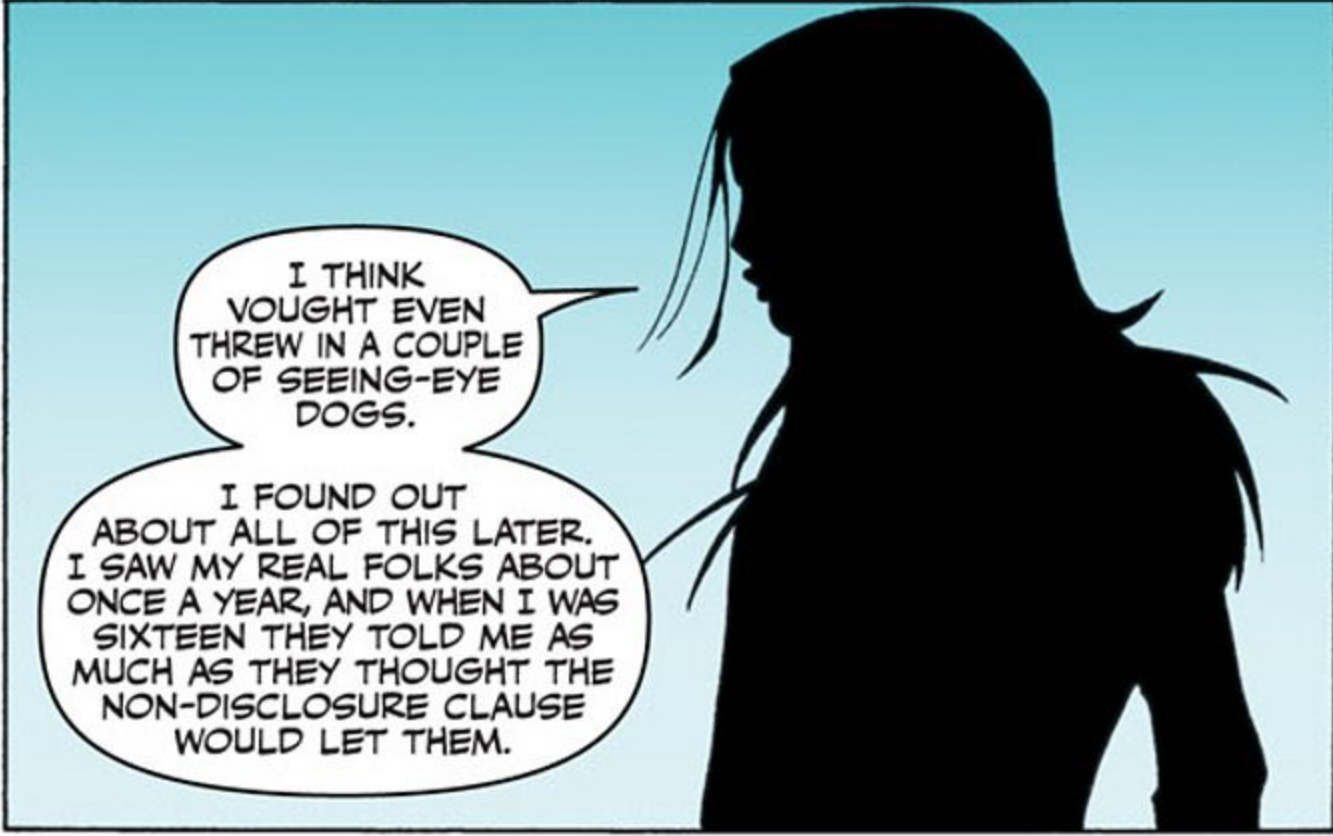
SO YOUR FOLKS JUST...SIGNED YOU AWAY...?

THEY WERE PROMISED VISITATION. AND THERE WAS THE OBVIOUS POINT THAT THEY WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO COPE, SO IN A WAY THEY WERE DOING THE RIGHT THING.

THEN THERE WAS THE MONEY--LIFE WAS GOING TO BE TOUGH ENOUGH IN THEIR CONDITION, BUT THE DOCTOR AND THE MIDWIFE WERE SUPPOSED TO BE CONSIDERING A MAJOR LAWSUIT. SO IT WOULD BE NICE IF THAT COULD BE MADE TO GO AWAY.



ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, THEY WERE HELPED TO UNDERSTAND HOW THINGS WOULD BE.



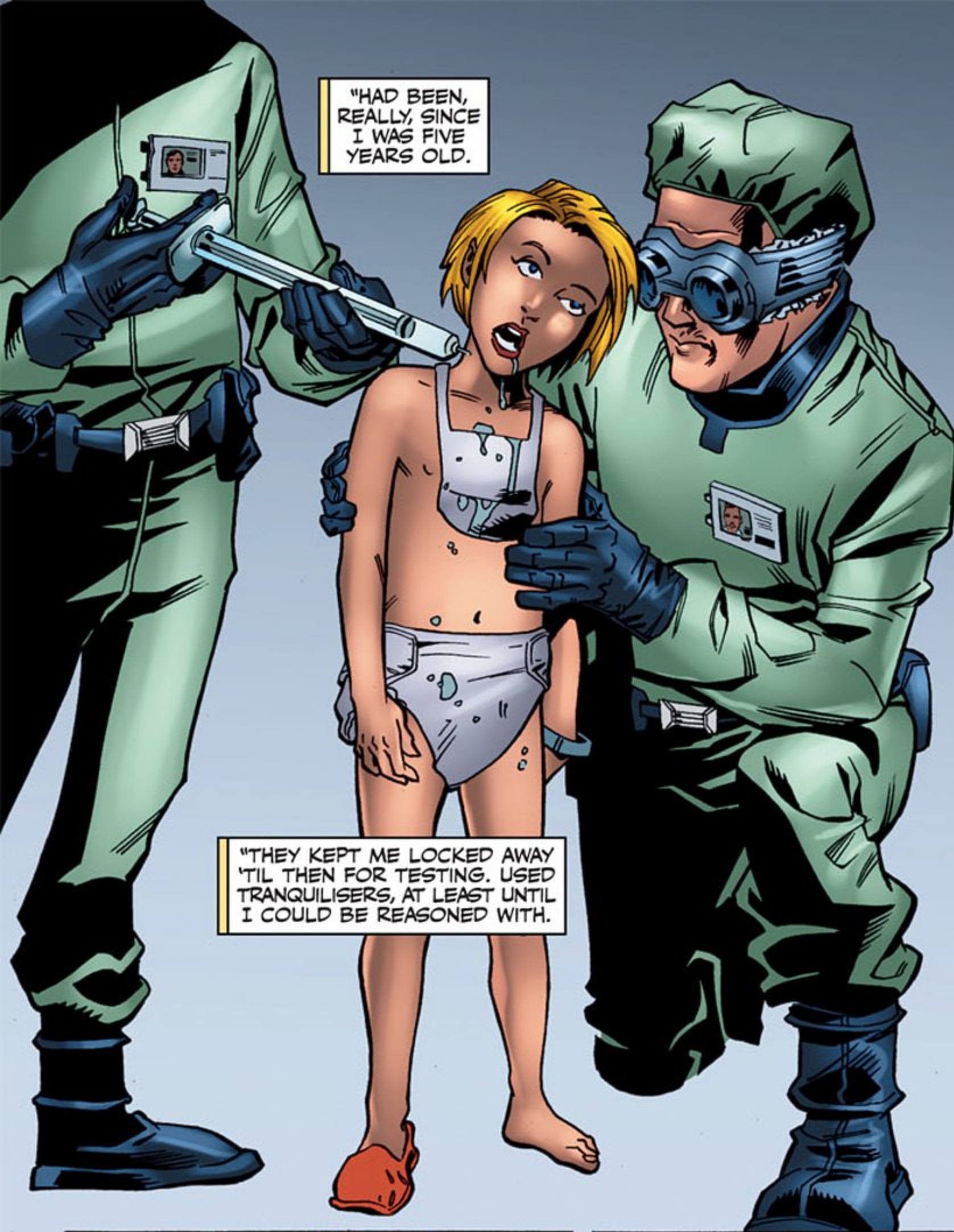
I THINK VOUGHT EVEN THREW IN A COUPLE OF SEEING-EYE DOGS.

I FOUND OUT ABOUT ALL OF THIS LATER. I SAW MY REAL FOLKS ABOUT ONCE A YEAR, AND WHEN I WAS SIXTEEN THEY TOLD ME AS MUCH AS THEY THOUGHT THE NON-DISCLOSURE CLAUSE WOULD LET THEM.



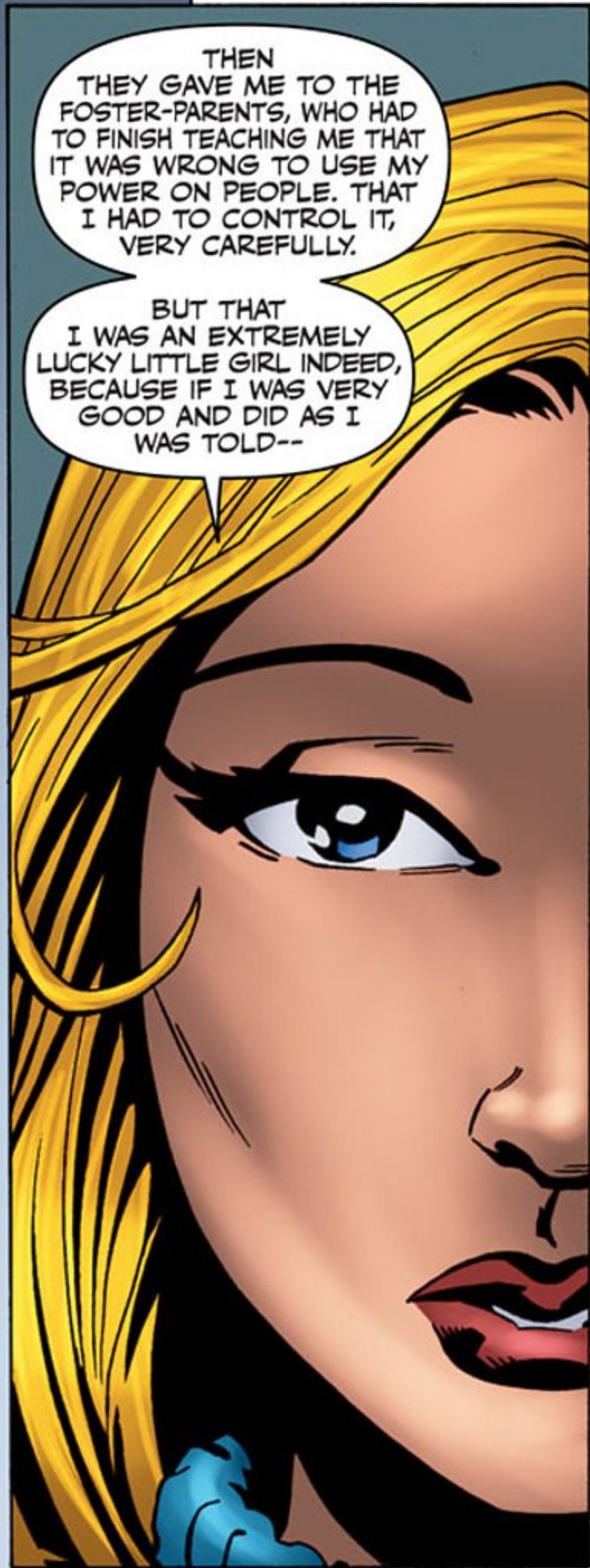
ACTUALLY, THEY WEREN'T ALL THAT DISCRETE ABOUT IT, REALLY.

I THINK I WAS JUST CAREFUL NOT TO READ TOO DEEP BETWEEN THE LINES, BECAUSE BY THEN THE COURSE OF MY LIFE WAS SET IN STONE.



"HAD BEEN, REALLY, SINCE I WAS FIVE YEARS OLD."

"THEY KEPT ME LOCKED AWAY 'TIL THEN FOR TESTING. USED TRANQUILISERS, AT LEAST UNTIL I COULD BE REASONED WITH."

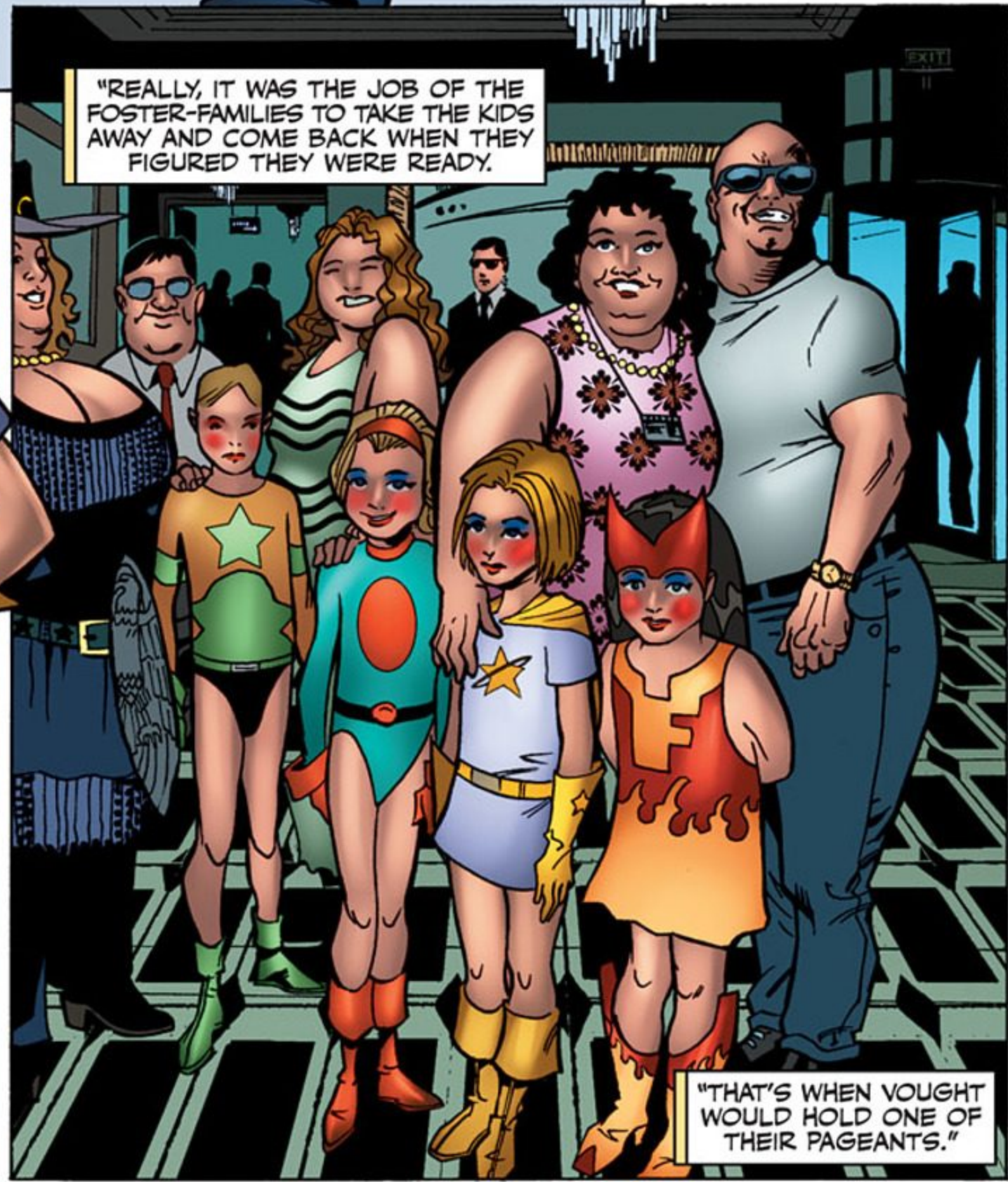


THEN THEY GAVE ME TO THE FOSTER-PARENTS, WHO HAD TO FINISH TEACHING ME THAT IT WAS WRONG TO USE MY POWER ON PEOPLE. THAT I HAD TO CONTROL IT, VERY CAREFULLY.

BUT THAT I WAS AN EXTREMELY LUCKY LITTLE GIRL INDEED, BECAUSE IF I WAS VERY GOOD AND DID AS I WAS TOLD--

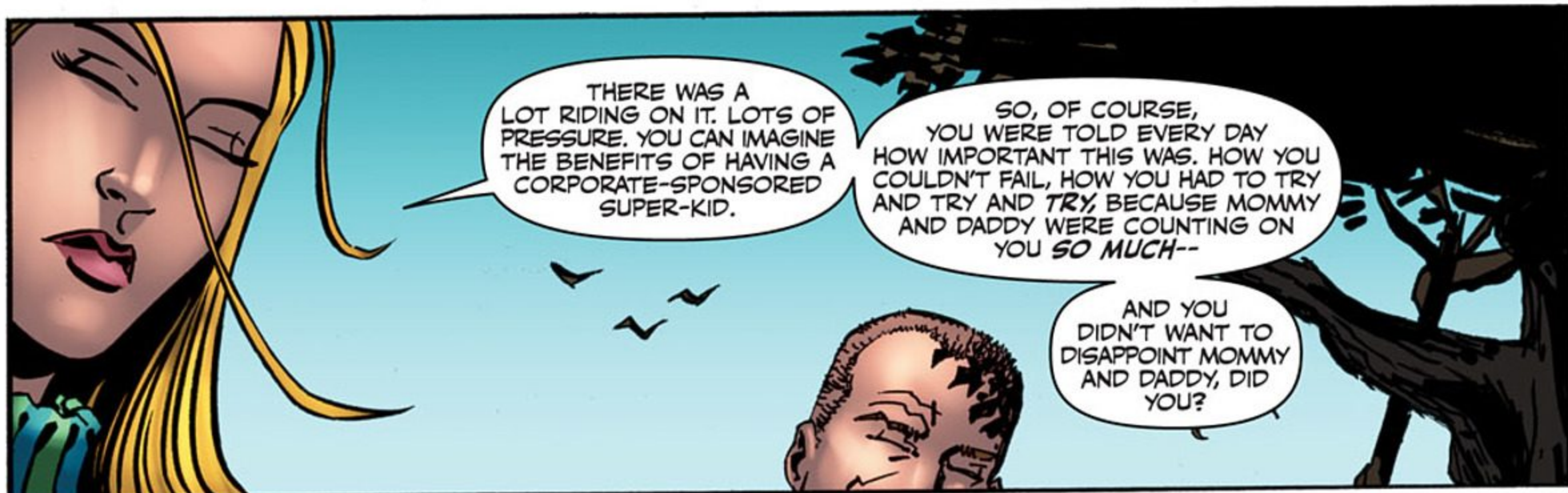


"THEN I COULD BE A SUPERHERO."



"REALLY, IT WAS THE JOB OF THE FOSTER-FAMILIES TO TAKE THE KIDS AWAY AND COME BACK WHEN THEY FIGURED THEY WERE READY."

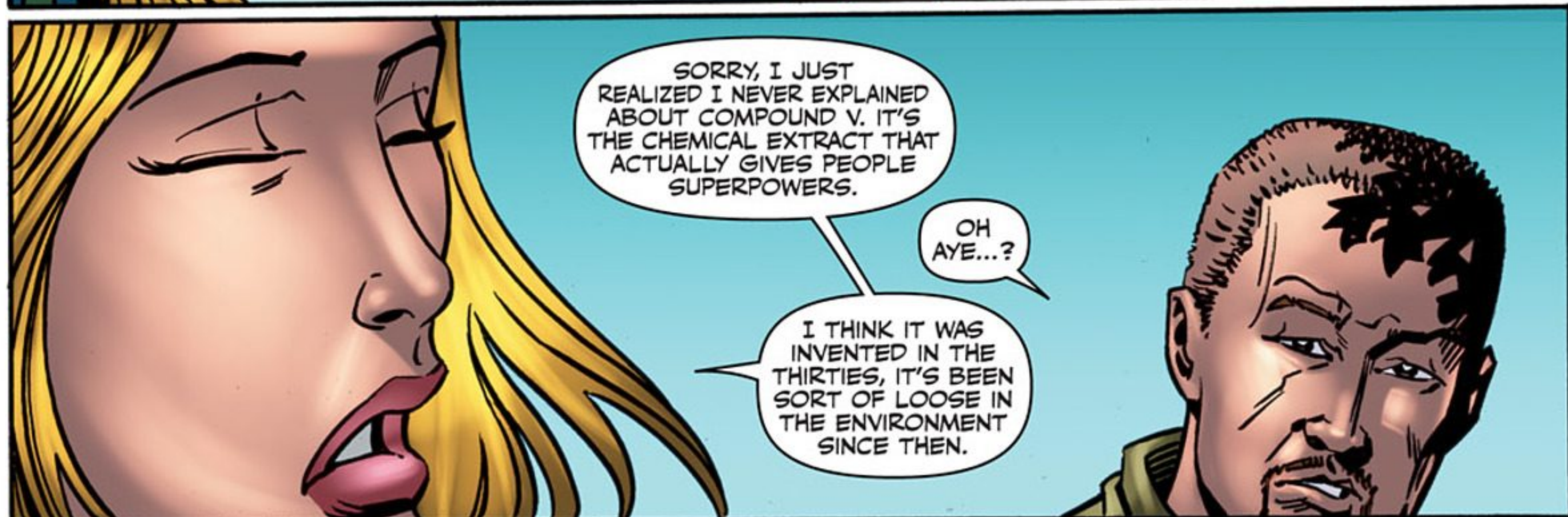
"THAT'S WHEN VOUGHT WOULD HOLD ONE OF THEIR PAGEANTS."



THERE WAS A LOT RIDING ON IT. LOTS OF PRESSURE. YOU CAN IMAGINE THE BENEFITS OF HAVING A CORPORATE-SPONSORED SUPER-KID.

SO, OF COURSE, YOU WERE TOLD EVERY DAY HOW IMPORTANT THIS WAS. HOW YOU COULDN'T FAIL, HOW YOU HAD TO TRY AND TRY AND TRY, BECAUSE MOMMY AND DADDY WERE COUNTING ON YOU *SO MUCH*--

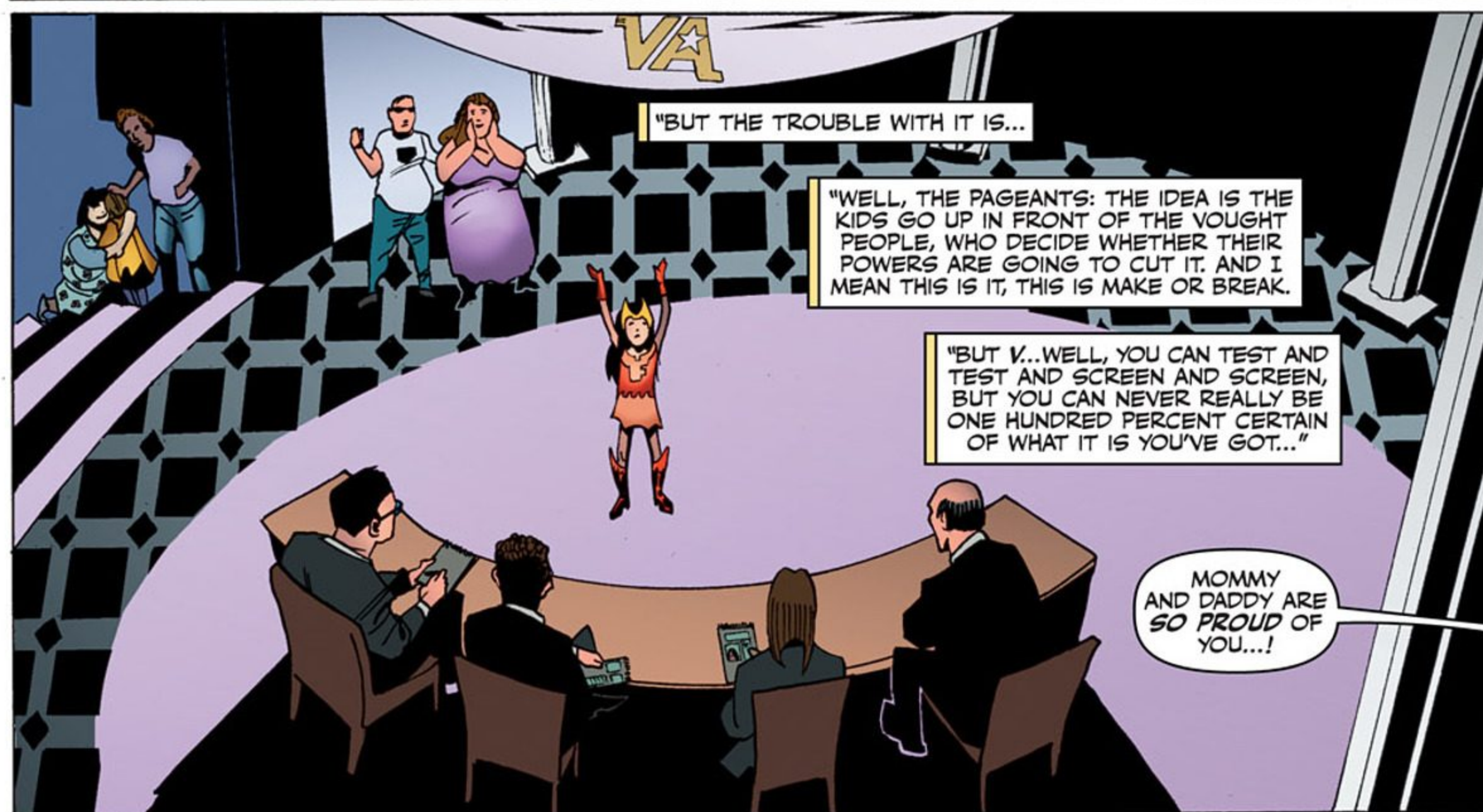
AND YOU DIDN'T WANT TO DISAPPOINT MOMMY AND DADDY, DID YOU?



SORRY, I JUST REALIZED I NEVER EXPLAINED ABOUT COMPOUND V. IT'S THE CHEMICAL EXTRACT THAT ACTUALLY GIVES PEOPLE SUPERPOWERS.

OH AYE...?

I THINK IT WAS INVENTED IN THE THIRTIES, IT'S BEEN SORT OF LOOSE IN THE ENVIRONMENT SINCE THEN.



"BUT THE TROUBLE WITH IT IS..."

"WELL, THE PAGEANTS: THE IDEA IS THE KIDS GO UP IN FRONT OF THE VOUGHT PEOPLE, WHO DECIDE WHETHER THEIR POWERS ARE GOING TO CUT IT. AND I MEAN THIS IS IT, THIS IS MAKE OR BREAK.

"BUT V...WELL, YOU CAN TEST AND TEST AND SCREEN AND SCREEN, BUT YOU CAN NEVER REALLY BE ONE HUNDRED PERCENT CERTAIN OF WHAT IT IS YOU'VE GOT..."

MOMMY AND DADDY ARE *SO PROUD* OF YOU...!



YOU ACED IT, ANNIE--

YOU DID *SO WELL*--

YOU FLEW SO HIGH AND YOU SHONE SO *BRIGHT*--

EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE WONDERFUL NOW, WE LOVE YOU *SO MUCH*--

YOU'RE OUR LITTLE SUPERHERO...!

NNAAAAAAAHHH



WE'RE VERY SORRY, BUT THERE'S OBVIOUSLY NOTHING HAPPENING...

I MEAN IF SHE CAN'T EVEN LIGHT THEM...

AND THE REGULATIONS ARE VERY CLEAR, THIS IS THE--

NNAAAAAAAAAAAHHH!



SO THIS IS WHAT IT WAS ALL FOR, IS IT?

COME ON, GET UP. STOP THAT AND GET UP.

NAAAAH!
NAAAAH!
NAAAAH!

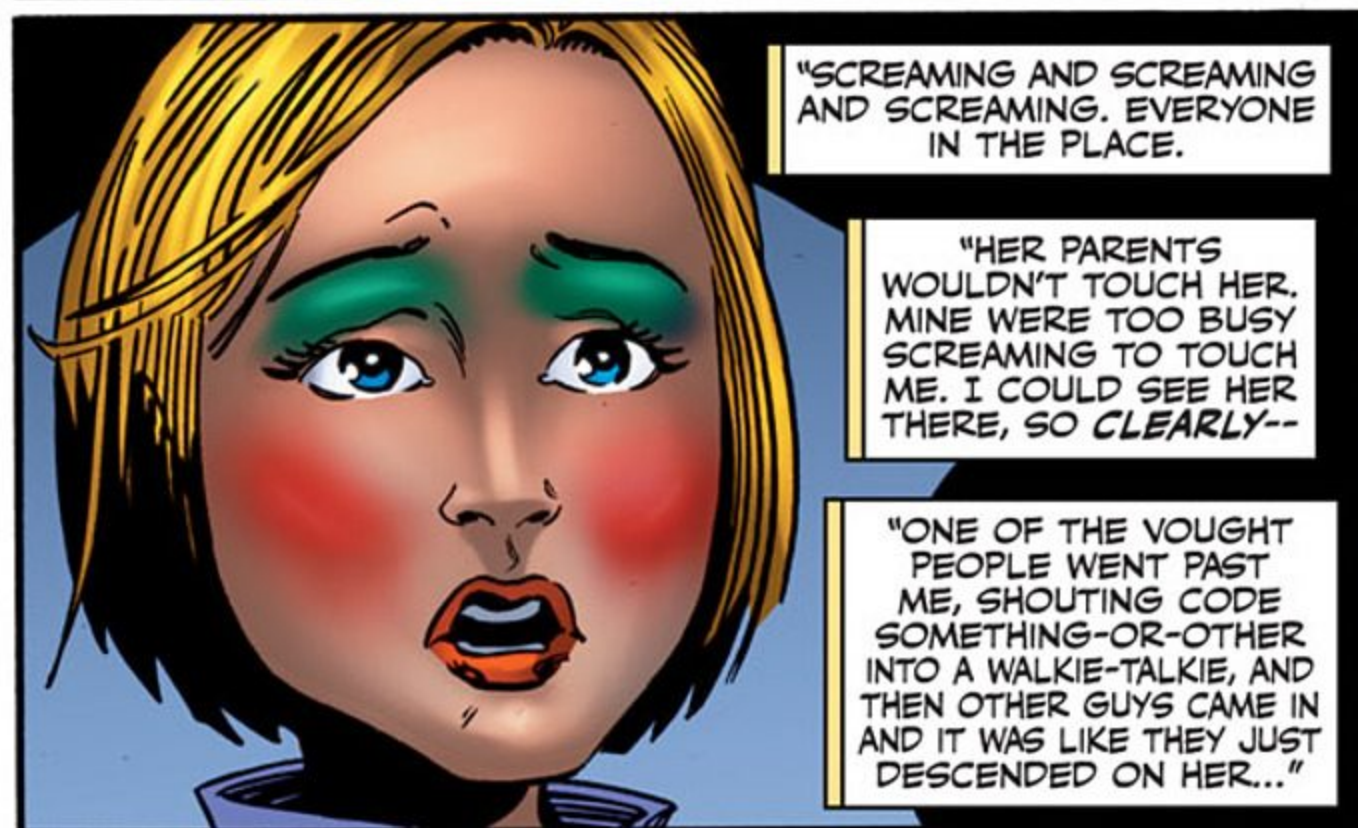
I SAID STOP THAT--!

NNAAAAAAAAAAAHHH!



ST--

I'M SORREEEEEEE...!



"SCREAMING AND SCREAMING AND SCREAMING. EVERYONE IN THE PLACE.

"HER PARENTS WOULDN'T TOUCH HER. MINE WERE TOO BUSY SCREAMING TO TOUCH ME. I COULD SEE HER THERE, SO CLEARLY--

"ONE OF THE VOUGHT PEOPLE WENT PAST ME, SHOUTING CODE SOMETHING-OR-OTHER INTO A WALKIE-TALKIE, AND THEN OTHER GUYS CAME IN AND IT WAS LIKE THEY JUST DESCENDED ON HER..."



SWEEPED HER UP.

THEN THE LITTLE SHAPE OF HER WAS GONE.



RIGHT, NO
MORE FUCKIN' FUN
AN' GAMES.



TOMORROW
NIGHT THE BORISES
ARE MEANT TO BE BRINGIN'
IN THE REST O' THE GEAR.
THEY SHOW UP W/ IT, YOU
TWO'RE GONNA LOAD UP AN'
FUCK OFF W/OUT ANY MORE
O' YER SHITE, HAVE YE
GOT THAT?

OH AYE,
MISTER
TUPPER!

WE'RE
VERY HAPPY W/ HOW
THINGS WERE LEFT,
MISTER TUPPER! NO
COMPLAINTS AT OUR
END AT ALL!



GOOD. 'CAUSE THEY
SHOW UP EMPTY-HANDED,
WEE SARAH'S GONNA CUT THE
TOPS O' THEIR HEADS OFF--
WHICH, IF IT COMES TO IT, WOULD
BE A BAD TIME FOR ANYONE
ELSE TO BE LOSIN' THEIR
NERVE.



AN' I DUNNO,
PANICKIN' AN'
RUNNIN' OFF
TO THE POLIS,
MAYBE...

ER--AH--NO' US,
MISTER TUPPER--!

W-W-WE'RE
THE BOYS YE CAN
RELY ON, SIR!



MY
CUP FUCKIN'
RUNNETH
OVER.

UM...DID
BEEZER SAY
ANYTHIN' TO YE,
MISTER TUPPER,
SIR?

'CAUSE HE
KEEPS SORTA
WINKIN' AT US AN'
ALL, LIKE HE
KENS WHAT'S
GOIN' ON...



AYE, HE'S HAD HIS TONGUE UP MY CRACK EVER SINCE I CAME IN HERE. BUT ALL HE KENS IS THAT IF I'M HANGIN' AROUND THIS DUMP I MUST BE UP TO SOMETHIN', SO HE'S HOPIN' I'LL BRING HIM IN FOR A SLICE O' THE PIE.

HE'S FUCKIN' WELL DREAMIN'. THE LAST TIME I TRUSTED THE DOSS CUNT I LOST FIVE GRAND'S WORTH O' BACCY.



AYE, YOU KEEP ON WAVIN', FUCK-FLAPS.

THAT'S WHY I'VE GOT YER BOSS ON THIS ONE. HE'S A PRICK, BUT HE SEEMS TO MORE OR LESS KEN WHAT HE'S DOIN'.

BOSS?
YE MEAN--?

THAT BIG FRUIT'S NO' OUR BOSS, HE'S JUST THIS WANKER WAS AHEAD O' US IN SCHOOL!



THANKS FOR THE CLARIFICATION, I'VE BEEN DYIN' TO KNOW HOW THE DICK MET THE HEADS. ABOUT TIME THE TWO O' YE PISSED OFF, IS IT NO'?

AH...
WELL...

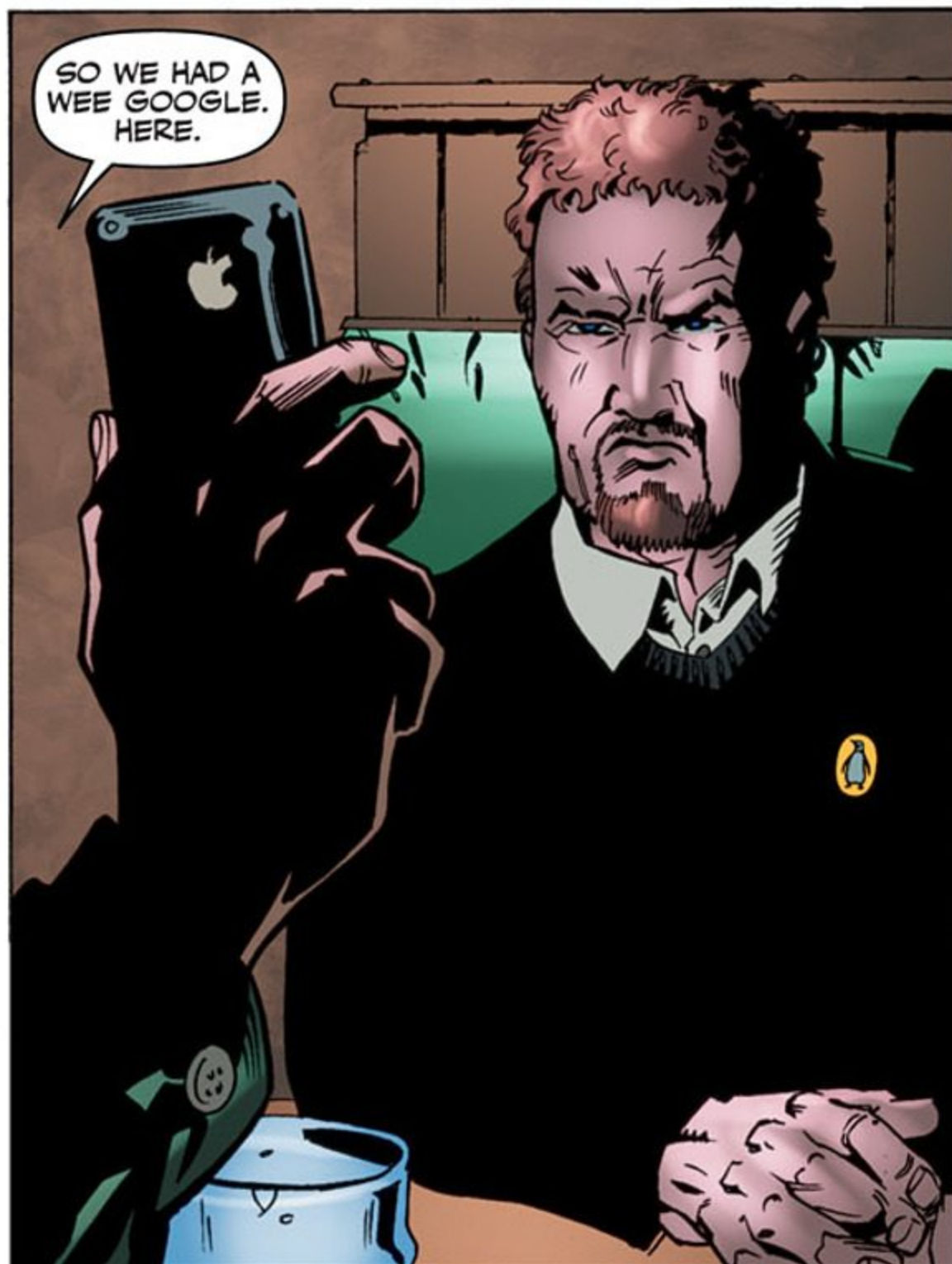
THERE WAS *ONE* WEE THING WE WANTED TO ASK YE ABOUT, MISTER TUPPER...



OH
AYE?

WE, WE GOT A BIT WORRIED ABOUT WHAT WE'RE DOIN', YE KEN? WI' THE--THE GEAR, LIKE...

AYE, I MEAN YE HEAR ALL SORTS O' THINGS, DON'T YE?



SO WE HAD A WEE GOOGLE. HERE.







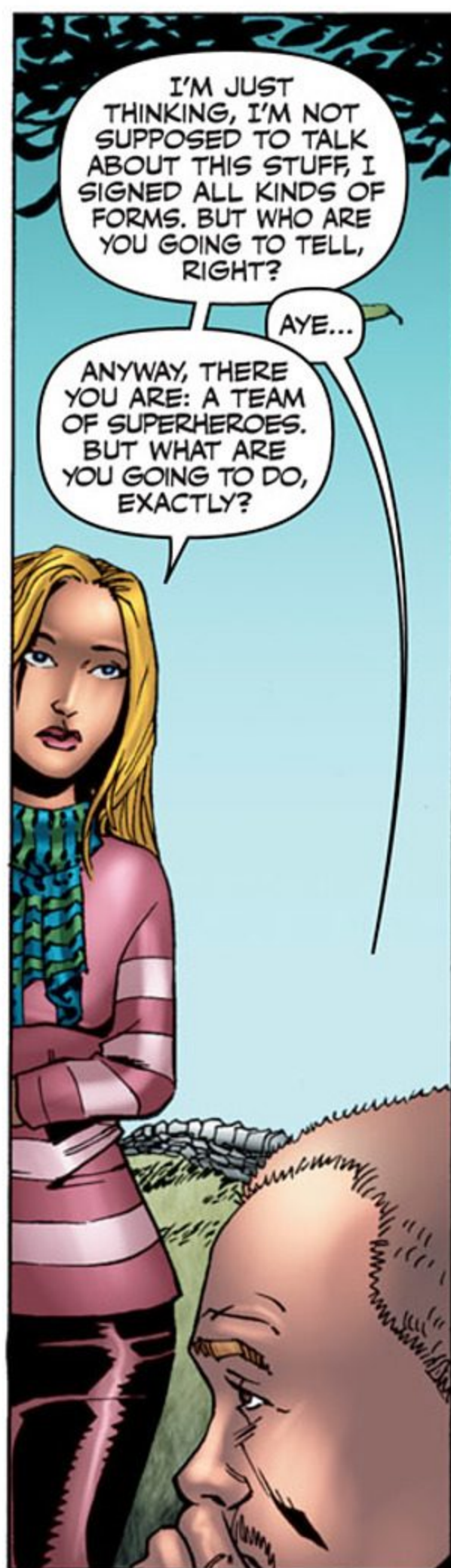
"WHICH WAS A WEIRD EXPERIENCE."



"AND THEN IT'S HAVE FUN, WE'LL BE IN TOUCH."

"THE ROOM'S A RENTAL, BY THE WAY. WE'LL BE IN TOUCH ABOUT THAT, TOO."

"AND YOU'RE TOLD, OKAY, YOU GUYS COVER EVERYTHING BETWEEN ARKANSAS AND THE CANADIAN BORDER, AND WEST AS FAR AS ABOUT WYOMING. DON'T GO ANYWHERE NEAR CHICAGO, WE'RE THINKING OF MOVING PAYBACK THERE IF THE MAVERIKZ DON'T PAN OUT."



I'M JUST THINKING, I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO TALK ABOUT THIS STUFF, I SIGNED ALL KINDS OF FORMS. BUT WHO ARE YOU GOING TO TELL, RIGHT?

AYE...

ANYWAY, THERE YOU ARE: A TEAM OF SUPERHEROES. BUT WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, EXACTLY?



"WELL, WE DIDN'T KNOW, SO WE ELECTED **THE STANDARD** AS OUR LEADER.

"THEN WE ASKED HIM, BUT HE HADN'T HAD ANY NEW IDEAS DURING THE ELECTION. IT WAS **GENERAL ISSUE** WHO SUGGESTED BUYING A POLICE SCANNER..."



WHAT SORT OF A NAME'S THE **STANDARD** MEANT TO BE--?

HE SAID IT WAS LIKE A FLAG, YOU KNOW, LIKE YOU CARRY INTO BATTLE? BUT I THINK IT'S MORE LIKELY THAT SOMEONE JUST RAN OUT OF INSPIRATION AT SOME POINT.

WE GOT A LOT OF STUFF OFF THE SCANNER, BUT IT WAS MOSTLY TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS OR BAR FIGHTS RATHER THAN LOCATIONS OF SHADY WATERFRONT DENS. AND WHEN WE DID GET SOMETHING WE THOUGHT WE COULD HELP WITH, WHICH WAS A FACTORY FIRE, WE REALIZED THE NEXT THING WE NEEDED WAS A STREET MAP.



AYE, YOU SEE, THAT'S THE THING THAT'S ALWAYS BOTHERED ME ABOUT SUPES...OR MAYBE JUST THE IDEA O' SUPES...

ALL RIGHT, SO YOU'VE GOT YOUR POWERS, BUT YOU'VE NO IDEA HOW TO DO WHAT YOU'RE DOIN', HAVE YOU? SO WHY DO YOU JUST-- DRESS UP LIKE A LOAD O' BAMS AN' START IN?

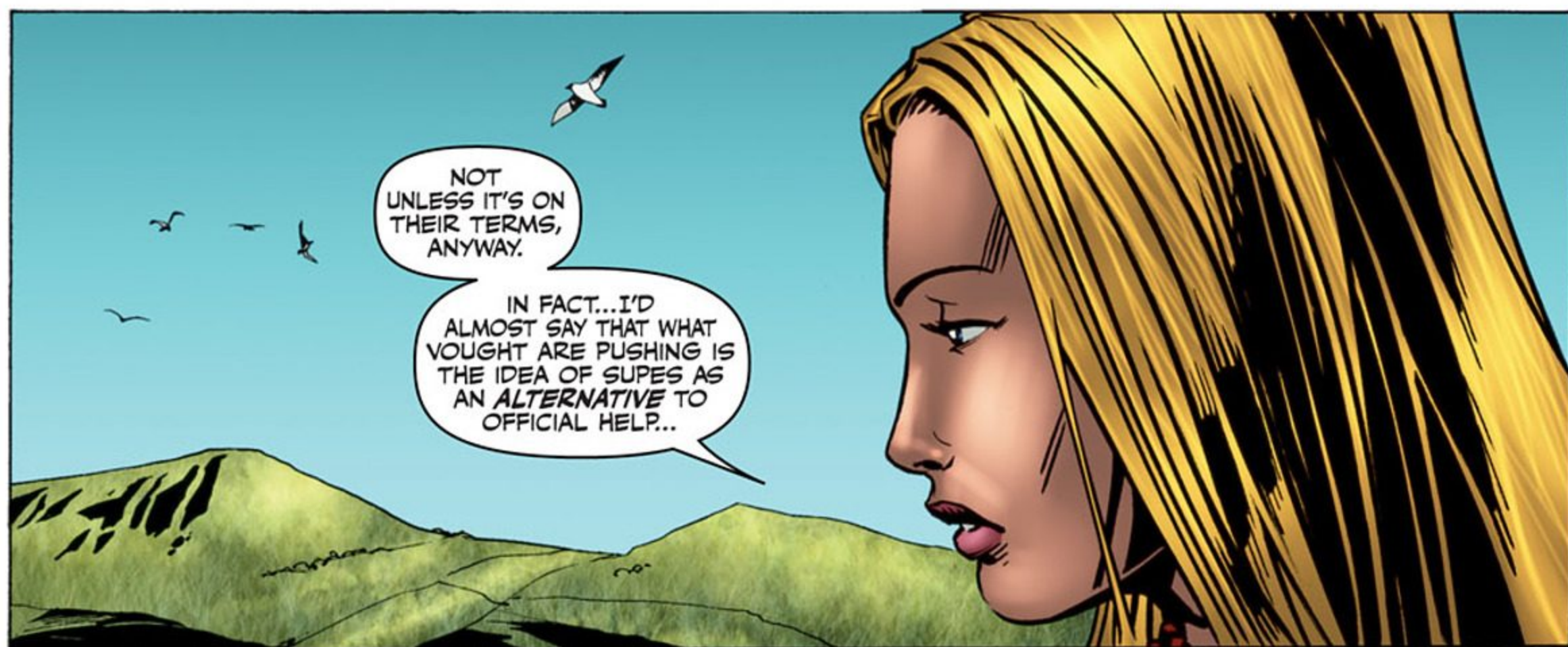


I MEAN IF YOU WANNA HELP FOLK, WHY D'YOU NO' GO ALONG TO A HOSPITAL AN' SAY--I COULD WORK HERE, I COULD FLY CASUALTIES IN AFTER AN ACCIDENT. OR OFFER TO KICK DOORS DOWN FOR THE FIREMEN, OR WHATEVER.

I MEAN THEY COULD AT LEAST TRAIN YOU PROPERLY, COULDN'T THEY...?

GOOD QUESTION.

IT NEVER CAME UP FOR US, BUT...WITH HINDSIGHT, I'D GUESS THAT VOUGHT DON'T WANT SUPERPOWER ANYWHERE NEAR FEDERAL HANDS. OR LOCAL SERVICES EITHER.



NOT
UNLESS IT'S ON
THEIR TERMS,
ANYWAY.

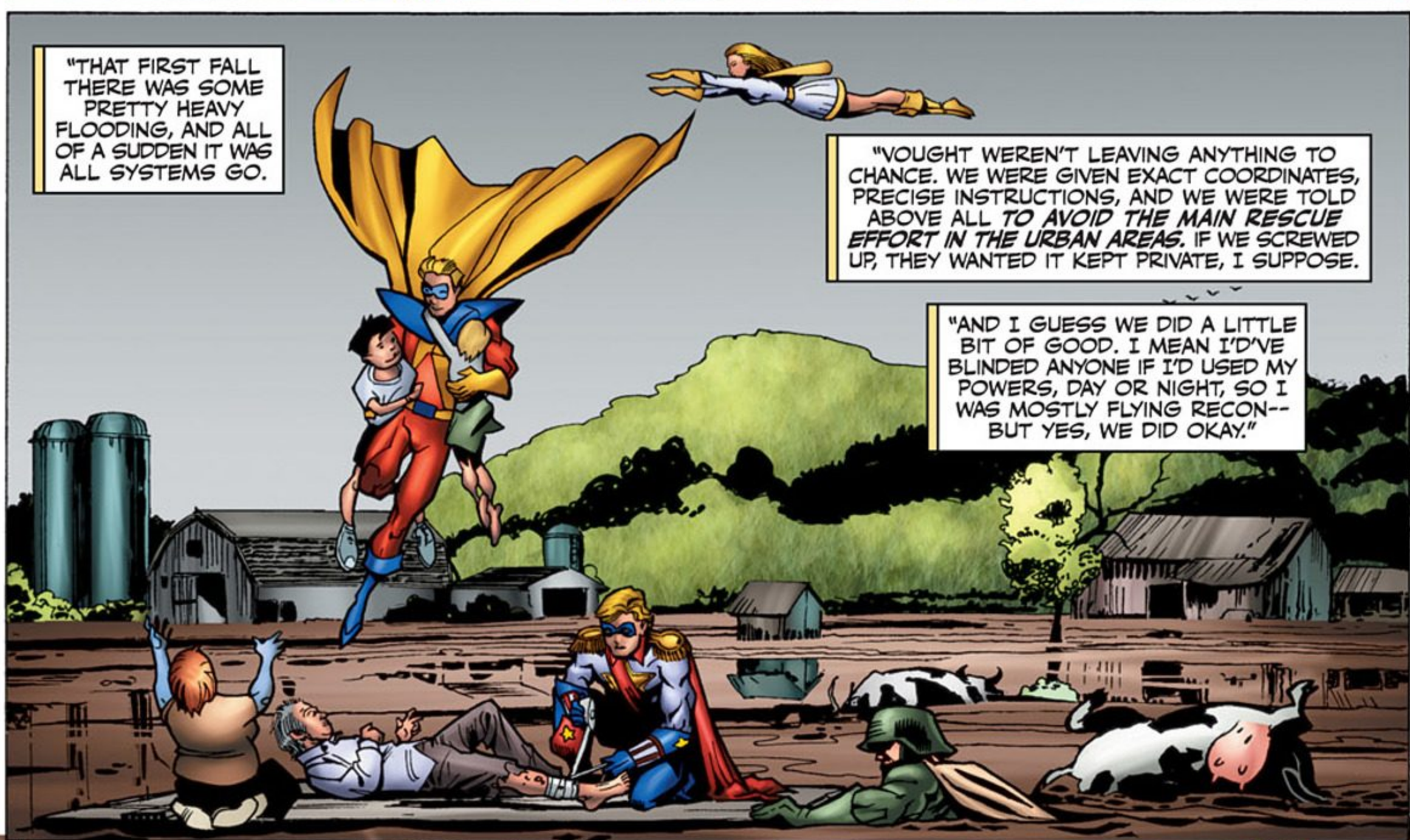
IN FACT...I'D
ALMOST SAY THAT WHAT
VOUGHT ARE PUSHING IS
THE IDEA OF SUPES AS
AN *ALTERNATIVE* TO
OFFICIAL HELP...



EVEN
IF YOU'RE
NO GOOD
AT IT?

OH,
WE'RE NOT
COMPLETELY
USELESS.

WE
MAKE A NICE
PROFIT, DON'T
FORGET.



"THAT FIRST FALL
THERE WAS SOME
PRETTY HEAVY
FLOODING, AND ALL
OF A SUDDEN IT WAS
ALL SYSTEMS GO.

"VOUGHT WEREN'T LEAVING ANYTHING TO
CHANCE. WE WERE GIVEN EXACT COORDINATES,
PRECISE INSTRUCTIONS, AND WE WERE TOLD
ABOVE ALL TO *AVOID THE MAIN RESCUE
EFFORT IN THE URBAN AREAS*. IF WE SCREWED
UP, THEY WANTED IT KEPT PRIVATE, I SUPPOSE.

"AND I GUESS WE DID A LITTLE
BIT OF GOOD. I MEAN I'D'VE
BLINDED ANYONE IF I'D USED MY
POWERS, DAY OR NIGHT, SO I
WAS MOSTLY FLYING RECON--
BUT YES, WE DID OKAY."



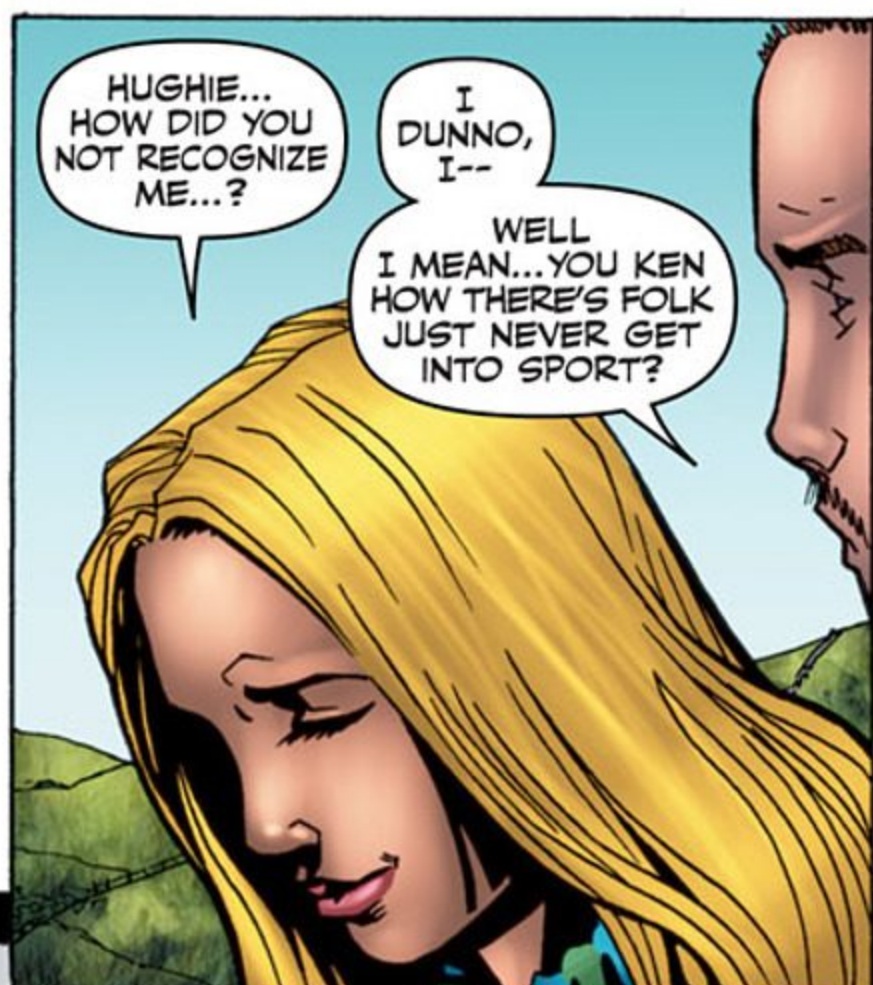
"ENOUGH THAT WE
GOT JUST THE RIGHT
KIND OF ATTENTION."



THAT MEANT
CELEBRITY. WHICH
MEANT MOVING
PRODUCT.

COMIC BOOKS AND
MAGAZINES, AND T.V. SHOW
CAMEOS, AND BRANDS AND
LOGOS AND CLOTHING
LINES--VOUGHT WERE
DELIGHTED WITH US.

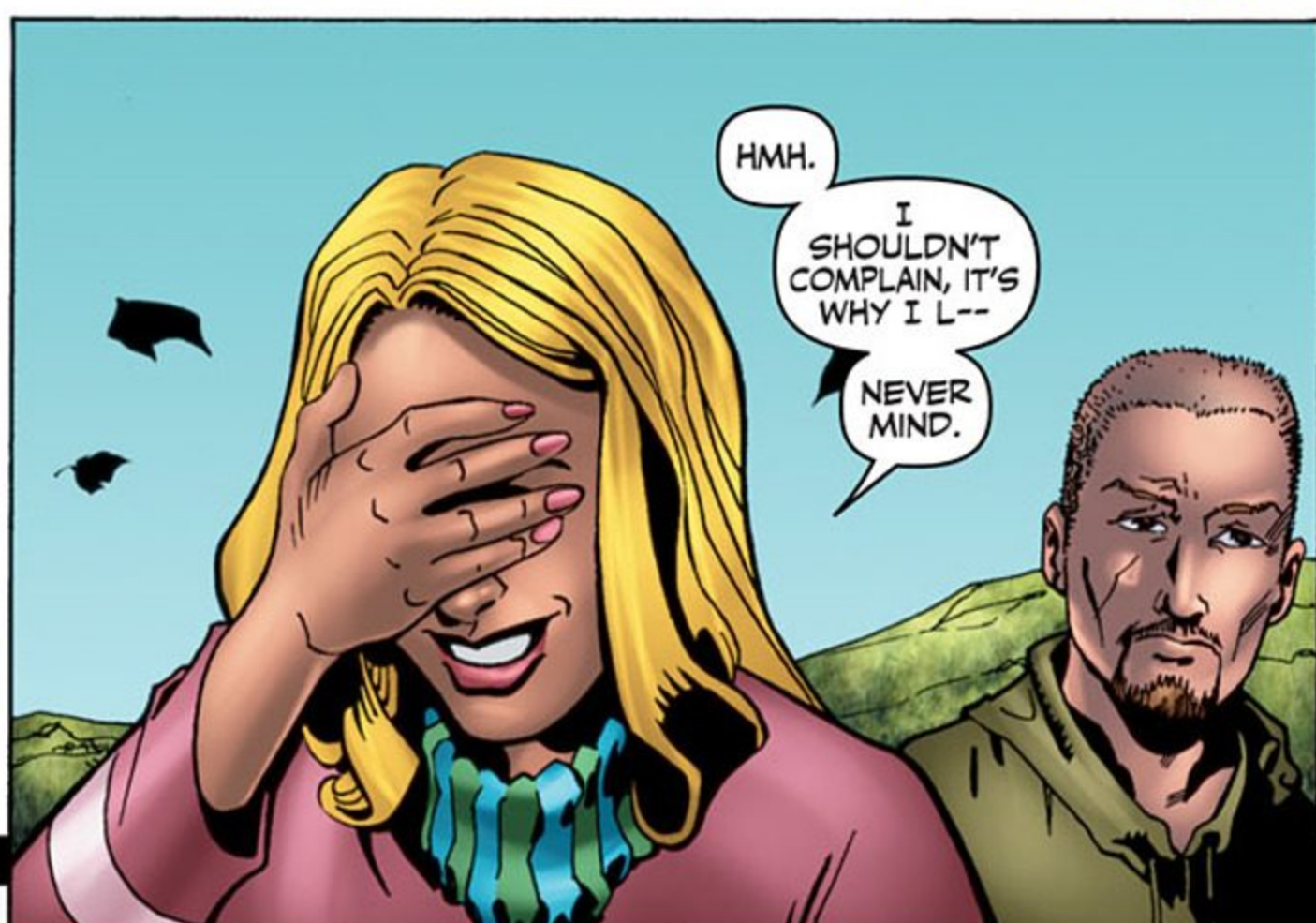
WHICH MEANT
MORE DISASTER
PSEUDO-RELIEF,
AND LOTS MORE
PHOTO-OPS.



HUGHIE...
HOW DID YOU
NOT RECOGNIZE
ME...?

I
DUNNO,
I--

WELL
I MEAN... YOU KEN
HOW THERE'S FOLK
JUST NEVER GET
INTO SPORT?



HMH.

I
SHOULDN'T
COMPLAIN, IT'S
WHY I L--

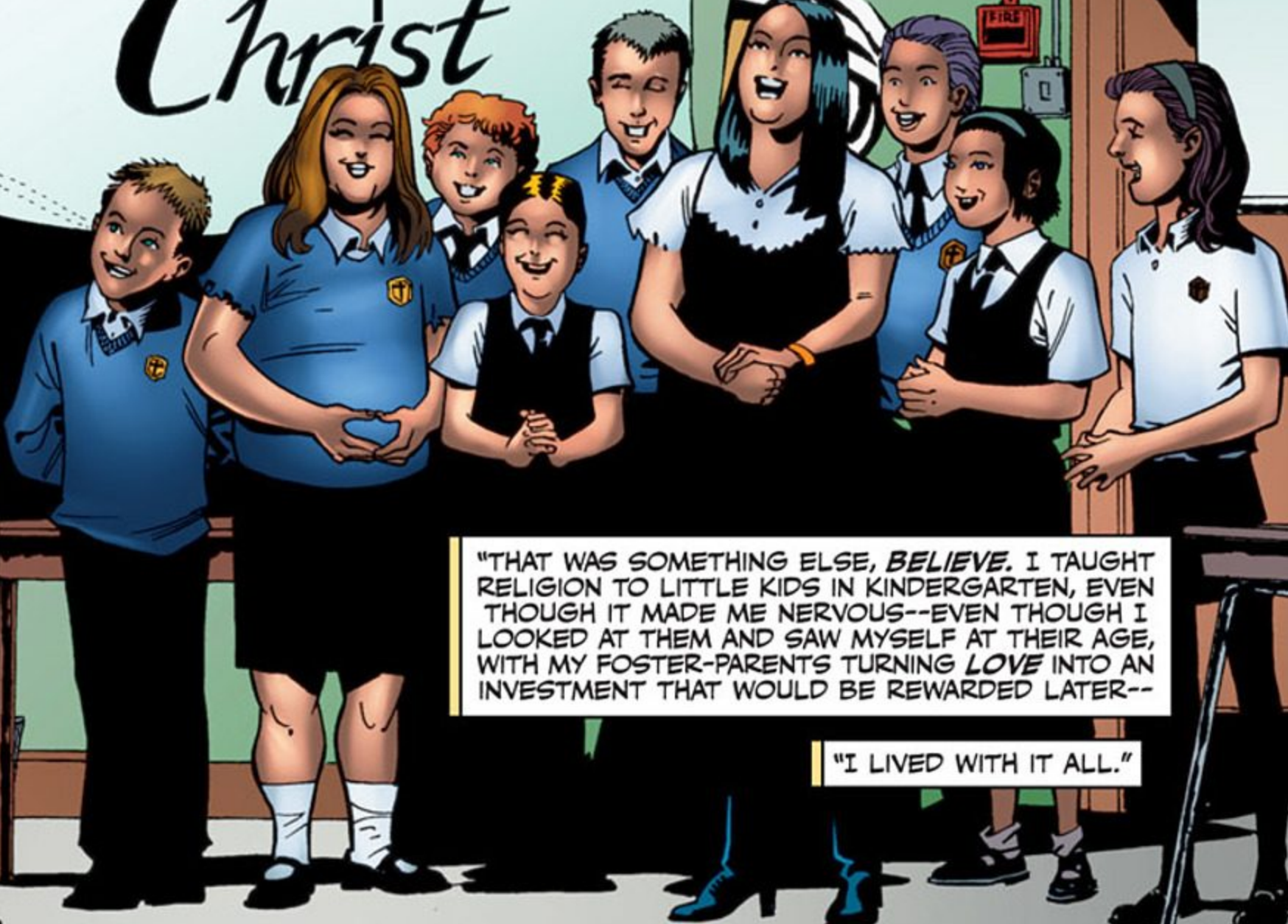
NEVER
MIND.

g Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx

"SO, I LIVED WITH IT.

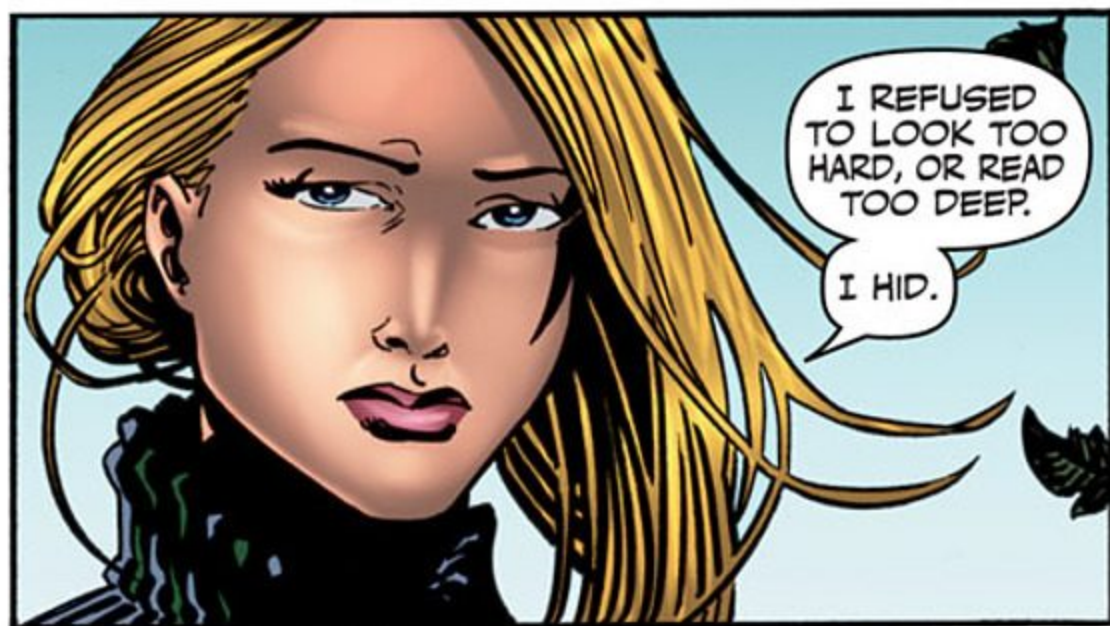
Capes for Christ

"THE PUBLICITY, THE CHEESY GLAMOUR, THE LIMITS
OF WHAT WE COULD DO WITH OUR POWERS...I HAD
A THING WITH DRUMMER BOY, AND IT WAS STUPID,
BUT IT WAS PRETTY FAR FROM THE VOW OF CHASTITY
ROUTINE WE DID FOR CAPES FOR CHRIST.



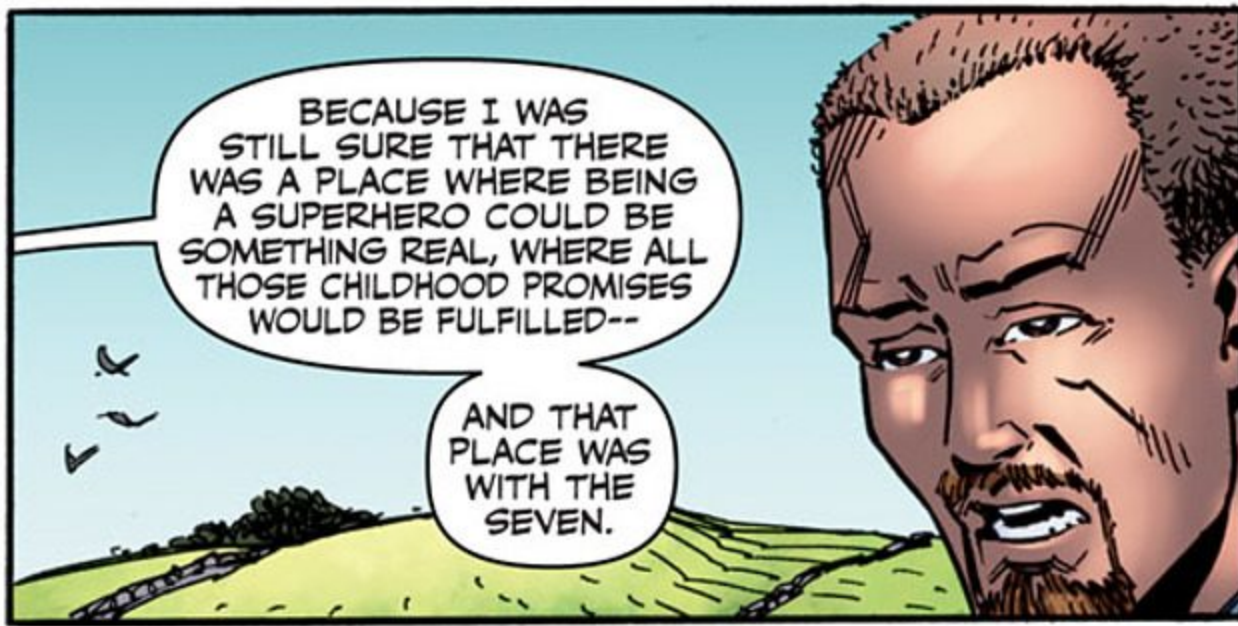
"THAT WAS SOMETHING ELSE, *BELIEVE*. I TAUGHT
RELIGION TO LITTLE KIDS IN KINDERGARTEN, EVEN
THOUGH IT MADE ME NERVOUS--EVEN THOUGH I
LOOKED AT THEM AND SAW MYSELF AT THEIR AGE,
WITH MY FOSTER-PARENTS TURNING *LOVE* INTO AN
INVESTMENT THAT WOULD BE REWARDED LATER--

"I LIVED WITH IT ALL."



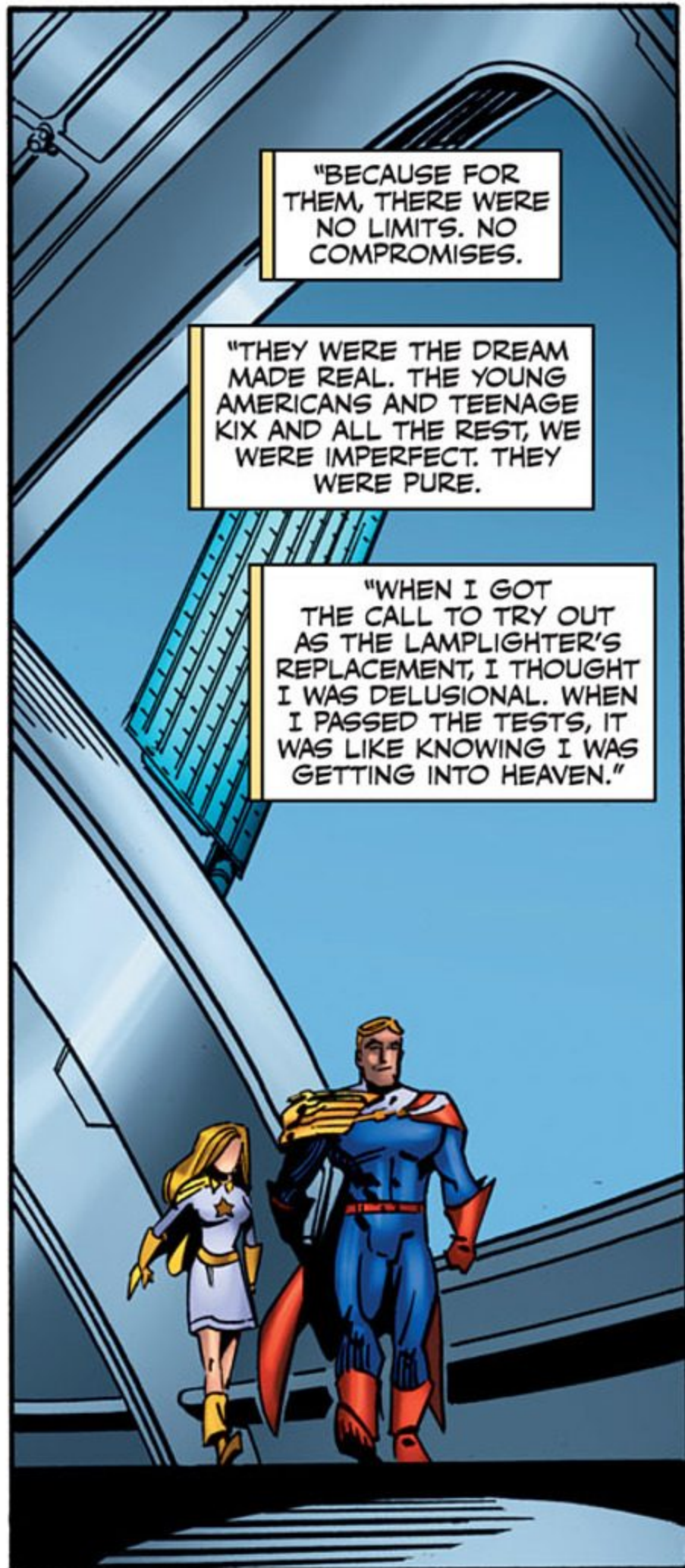
I REFUSED
TO LOOK TOO
HARD, OR READ
TOO DEEP.

I HID.



BECAUSE I WAS
STILL SURE THAT THERE
WAS A PLACE WHERE BEING
A SUPERHERO COULD BE
SOMETHING REAL, WHERE ALL
THOSE CHILDHOOD PROMISES
WOULD BE FULFILLED--

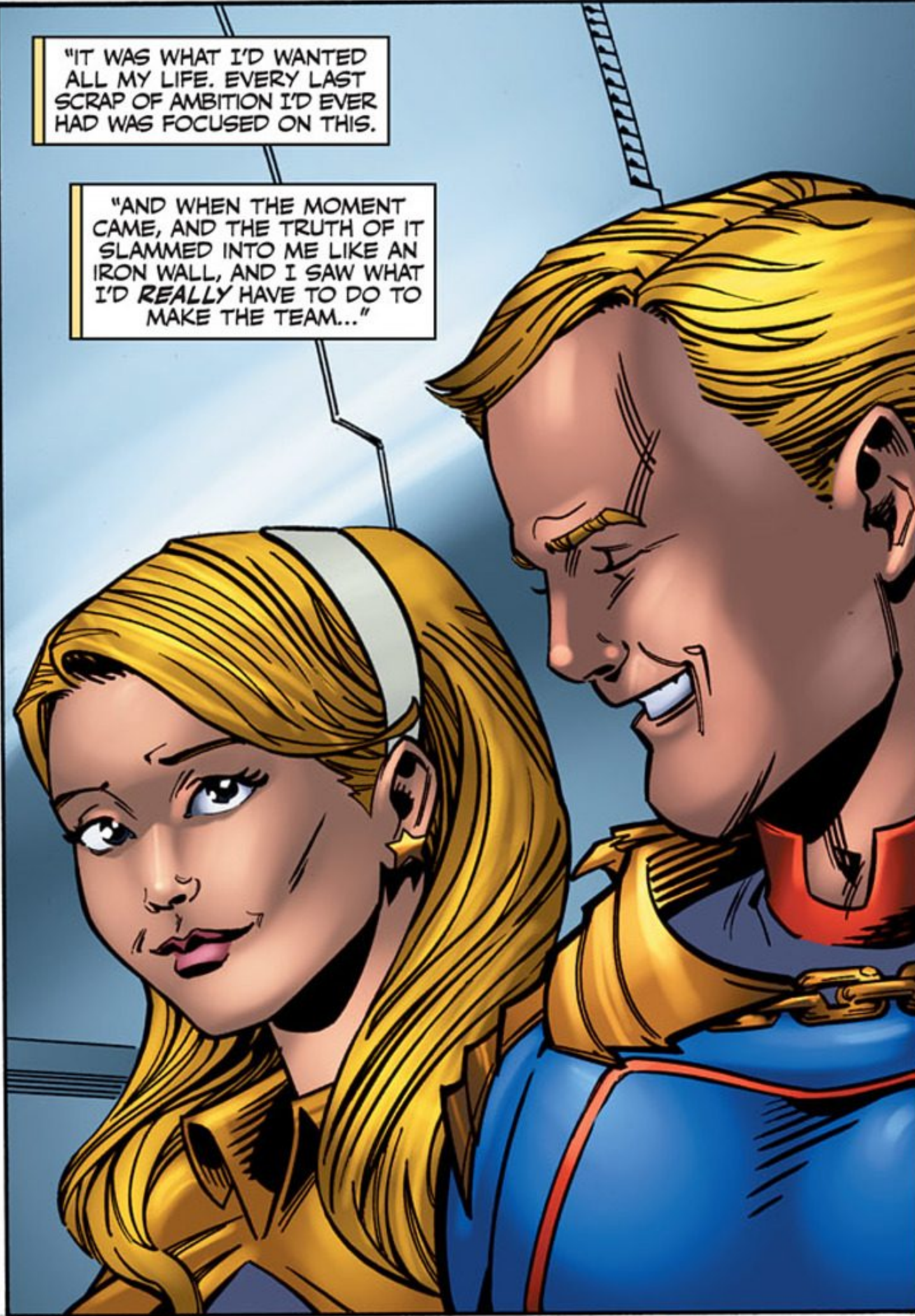
AND THAT
PLACE WAS
WITH THE
SEVEN.



"BECAUSE FOR
THEM, THERE WERE
NO LIMITS. NO
COMPROMISES.

"THEY WERE THE DREAM
MADE REAL. THE YOUNG
AMERICANS AND TEENAGE
KIX AND ALL THE REST, WE
WERE IMPERFECT. THEY
WERE PURE.

"WHEN I GOT
THE CALL TO TRY OUT
AS THE LAMPLIGHTER'S
REPLACEMENT, I THOUGHT
I WAS DELUSIONAL. WHEN
I PASSED THE TESTS, IT
WAS LIKE KNOWING I WAS
GETTING INTO HEAVEN."



"IT WAS WHAT I'D WANTED
ALL MY LIFE. EVERY LAST
SCRAP OF AMBITION I'D EVER
HAD WAS FOCUSED ON THIS.

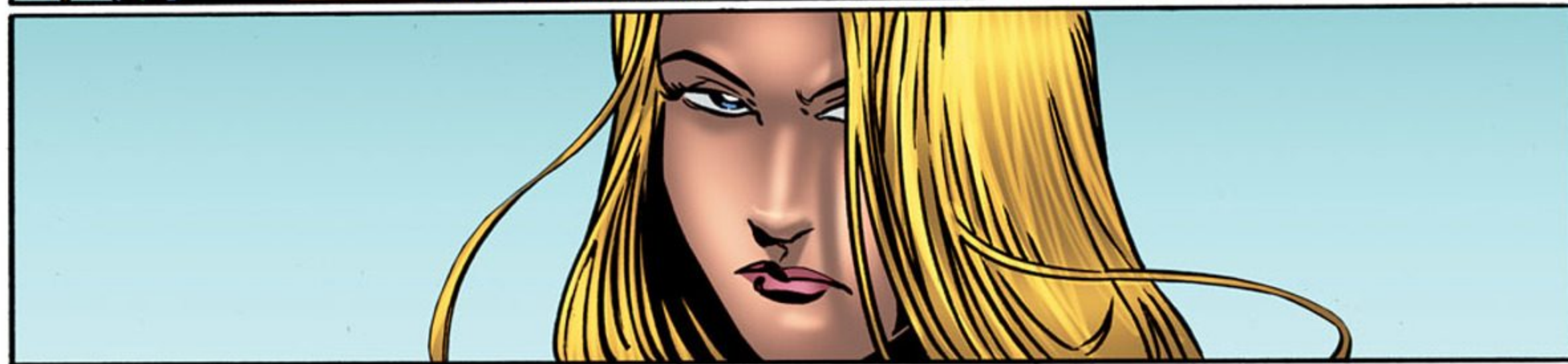
"AND WHEN THE MOMENT
CAME, AND THE TRUTH OF IT
SLAMMED INTO ME LIKE AN
IRON WALL, AND I SAW WHAT
I'D *REALLY* HAVE TO DO TO
MAKE THE TEAM..."

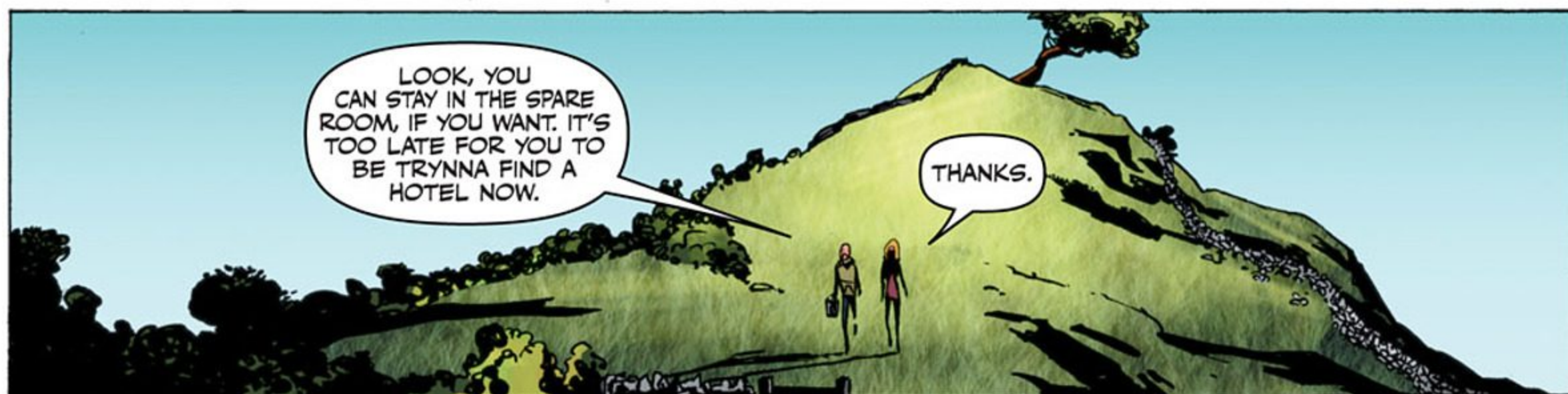


WELL.

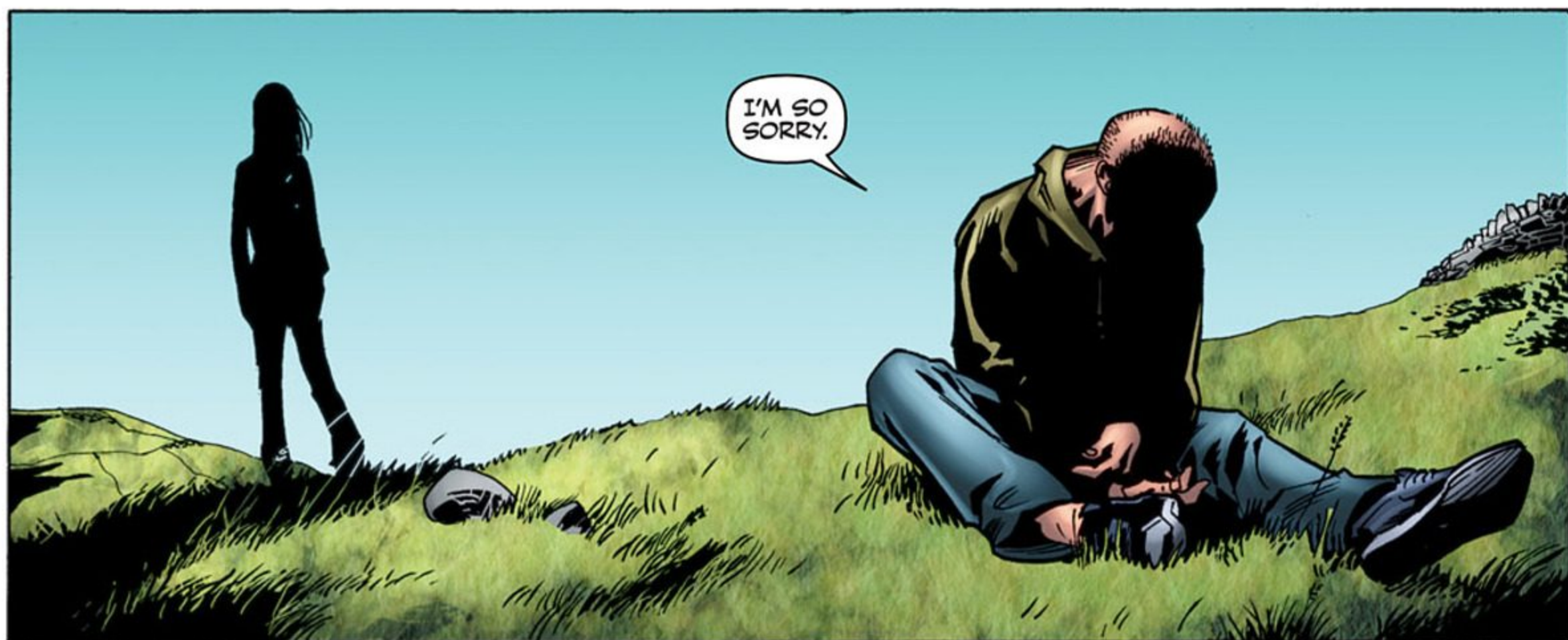
I GUESS
I WAS READY TO
LIVE WITH ONE
LAST THING.

AYE.









I'M SO SORRY.

WHATEVER ELSE HAPPENED...I'D NO RIGHT TO SAY THAT SHITE TO YOU.

IT WAS ABSOLUTELY FUCKIN' AWFUL O' ME. I'VE NEVER SAID ANYTHIN' LIKE THAT TO A LASSIE IN MY LIFE, I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I WAS THE SORTA FELLA *COULD* SAY IT...



WELL, THAT'S THE FUNNY THING, HUGHIE.

I'M NOT ALL THAT SURE YOU ARE.



I REMEMBER YOU, YOU COULD HARDLY GET THE WORDS OUT. IT WAS LIKE YOU WERE AN ACTOR, READING A BAD SCRIPT.

LIKE YOU DIDN'T REALLY BELIEVE IN ANY OF IT.



BUT... I DID SAY IT...

OH YES, YOU SAID IT.

YOU SAID IT, ALL RIGHT.



BUT CAN YOU MAKE IT STICK?



TO BE CONTINUED